

2026 ATHLETIC MANUAL

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BASEBALL / BASKETBALL / CHEERLEADING / CROSS COUNTRY / FLAG FOOTBALL / GOLF / LACROSSE / PICKLEBALL
TACKLE FOOTBALL / TENNIS / TRACK & FIELD / SOCCER / SOFTBALL / SWIMMING / VOLLEYBALL



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RULE CHANGES 2026 ATHLETIC MANUAL

The athletic manual is available online at www.grpa.org under the “Athletics” tab.

ALL SPORTS

- RC #13 - Weatherbug is the approved GRPA weather monitoring system for Heat Index.
- RC #21 - Age Control Dates are not an item considered for Hardship or Appeal.
- RC - Floor - If an athlete meets GRPA's participation eligibility, regardless of JV/Varsity roster position, they are eligible for GRPA's District and State tournament.

YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL

- RC #16 - 8U and 10U Girls/Boys/Coed shall use a pee wee size football.
- RC #17 - Add 8U, 10U, 12U Boys/Coed Flag Football.
- RC #18 - Youth Flag Football games will be governed by the rules of GHSA and the by-laws of NIRSA NFHS Rule book with the exceptions found in the manual.

SWIMMING

- RC #45 - Class B and Class C State Swim meet will be held in one location, but separate results and records will be kept.

BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

- RC #33 - Softball - A team may begin/continue with 8 players in live arm and with 9 in machine or coach pitch.
- RC #34 - Baseball - 8U Coach Pitch pitcher must pitch no closer than 30ft.
- RC #39 - Baseball/Softball Pitching Machine should be set up by the tournament director prior to the tournament.
- RC #40 - Baseball/Softball pitching machine wheels should be placed at the correct distance set for each age group.
- RC - Floor - Age Control Date for Baseball/Softball ONLY will be on June 30th of current year.

SOCCER

- RC - Floor - If rule interpretation is not found in this manual, interpretation will defer to GYSA (USYS). If neither GRPA nor GYSA can clarify, the GHSA (NFHS) rules may be used.
- RC #1 - 8U will not have a second chance to throw in the ball.

TRACK & FIELD

- RC #6 - Usage of scratch form sheets will be mandatory at the state meet.

GOLF

- RC #9 - Players in 8U Girls/Boys, 11U Girls/Boys, and 13U Girls/Boys are able to ride the course with an adult.

VOLLEYBALL

- RC #8 - 10U Girls/Boys/Coed may serve underhand up to the 10' line. Overhand serves must be attempted from behind the modified 25' baseline.

PREFACE

The GRPA State Athletic Committee is charged with the responsibility of the organization, conduct, supervision, and evaluation of an athletic program for Georgia residents on a statewide basis for its members and affiliated groups. Authority for the committee is found in the CONSTITUTION AND BY- LAWS of the GEORGIA RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED.

The State Athletic Committee, mindful of its function and the authority vested in it by the members of the Georgia Recreation & Park Association, has set forth rules and regulations of which the objects and purposes are as follows:

1. To unite one organization in all competitive athletics conducted by agency members of GRPA;
2. To promote and maintain high standards of athletic competition and sportsmanship in Georgia;
3. To promote and provide the best training and guidance for athletic coaches and game officials;
4. To promote recognition of recreation sports for Georgia residents;
5. To improve and expand athletic participation;
6. To provide athletic and professional fellowship;
7. To assist in any practical way, the improvement of athletic competition throughout Georgia and to promote and regulate state championships where desirable and practical; and
8. To function in such a manner as will further the interests of athletic competition in Georgia and to promote the Georgia Recreation and Parks Association, Inc.

THE ATHLETIC MANUAL is the official publication of the GRPA State Athletic Committee with its intent and purpose being to provide rules and guidelines for athletic programs throughout the State of Georgia.

Reference is to types of activities, specific rules and qualifications for participants. The Athletic Manual is revised periodically, as the State Athletic Committee deems necessary. Manuals are to be made available at nominal costs to individuals and without charge to GRPA agency members, GRPA district commissioners, State Athletic Committee members and such organizations deemed appropriate by the committee chairperson.

The State Athletic Committee will serve as final authority on the interpretation of the rules and regulations established in this Athletic Manual of the Georgia Recreation and Park Association, Inc. The Athletic Manual is reviewed yearly with Rule Change requests received and voted upon every two years. Rules changes are voted on by simple majority for those rules that were submitted on time and distributed for review prior to the meeting. For any rule change that is made from the floor or requested by agency members on the date of the meeting must be approved by 2/3 of the members present for the rule to be adopted. Any rule changes made during non-rule change submittals will follow Robert's Rule of Order, as amended. For any matter to be reconsidered it must be motioned and seconded by the prevailing party and passed by 2/3 of members present.

After motion is back on the floor it will follow Robert's Rules of Order as amended and be subject to a simple majority vote. Rule changes that are made by National Governing Bodies that affect GRPA Athletic Manual will be voted on by the Committee during non- rule change year by simple majority.

State Host Bids received by the date required will be distributed to all members prior to the

meeting to discuss with their respective districts. Bids may only be taken from the floor if there are no bids submitted by the due date or if sole bidder withdraws their name. State host bids will be determined by a simple majority vote.

Adopted the 4th day of January 1964. Revised: December 11, 1965; January 31, 1967; January 4, 1970; January 11, 1972; January 9, 1974; January 7, 1975; September 9, 1975; September 14, 1976; September 23, 1977; September 14, 1978; September 25, 1979; September 16 and 17, 1980; September 16, 1981; September 29, 1982; September 28, 1983; September 19, 1984; September 12, 1985; September 18, 1986; August 27, 1987; August 25, 1988; August 22, 1989; September 19, 1990; August 19, 1991; September 14, 1992; September 8, 1993; August 17, 1994; September 11, 1995; September 9, 1996; September 9, 1997; September 2, 1998; August 28, 1999; August 29, 2000; August 2001; October 2-3, 2002; October 1-2, 2003; September 21, 2004; December 19, 2005; September 14, 2006; November 19, 2008; December 21, 2009; December 20, 2010, December 19, 2011; December 2012; December 2013; December 2014; December 2015; December 2016; December 2017; December 2018; December 2019; November 2020; December 2021; December 2022; November 2023; December 2024; December 2025

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Shelly McDaniel, CPRP (2027)
Madison Co.
Office: (706) 795.6270

Administration/Leadership Chair

Becky Summerlin, CPRP, CPO (2027)
Columbus
Office: (770) 920.3000

Athletic/Aquatic Chair

Jason Cutchins, AFO, Aqp. CPRP,
AFO,CPO,WSIT,LGIT, AFO (2027)
Gwinnett Co.
Office: (770) 822.8840

Parks Maintenance Operations Chair

Jordan Wood, CYSA (2026)
Cobb Co
Office: (770) 528-8800

Recreation Programming Chair

Jordon Gonzalez (2026)
Acworth
Office: (770) 917-1234

GEORGIA RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

1285 PARKER ROAD

CONYERS, GA 30094

PHONE: 770-760-1403

FAX: 770-760-1550

EMAIL: grpa@grpa.org

WEBSITE: www.grpa.org

Executive Director: Steve Card, CPRP; scard@grpa.org

Office Manager: Shelly Strickland; shelly@grpa.org

2026 STATE ATHLETIC COMMITTEE

Chair

Thad Ferguson
Carroll Co. Rec
1201 Newnan Road
Carrollton, GA 30116
Office: (770) 830-5902
tferguson@carrollcountyga.gov

Chair-Elect

John Layng
City of Carrollton Parks & Rec
PO Box 532
Carrollton, GA 30112
Office: (770) 832-1161
jlayng@carrollton-ga.gov

Past Chair

Randy "Spook" Spivey
Dodge Co. Rec
PO Box 4393
Eastman, GA 31023
Office: (478) 374-4696
spiveyr10@yahoo.com

Secretary

Kimberly Barros
Ware Co. Rec
2110 Cecil Brown Dr.
Waycross, GA 31503
Office: (912) 287-4488
kbarros@warecountyga.gov

Swim Liaison

Shyanna Corman
Moultrie-Colquitt Parks & Rec
PO Box 1749
Moultrie, GA 31776
Office: (229) 668-0028
shyanna.corman@mccpra.com

Track & Field Liaison

Craig Sowell
Retired Member
2053 Ferry Lake Road
Tifton, GA 31794
Office: (229) 392-1284
csnga01@gmail.com

DISTRICT 1

Chair

Kenny White
Hawkinsville/Pulaski Co Rec
PO Box 25
Hawkinsville, GA 31036
Office: (478) 892-3836
kennywhite879@gmail.com

Chair-Elect

James McGowan
Lyons Rec
161 NE Broad Street
Lyons, GA 30436
Office: (912) 524-1143
jmcgowan@lyonsga.org

At-Large

Truman Anderson
Screven County Rec
1605 Millen Hwy
Sylvania, GA 30647
Office: (912) 863-2388
sscrd@planters.net

DISTRICT 2

Chair

Jeremy Greene
Pooler Rec
100 SW Highway 80
Pooler, GA 31322
Office: (912) 210-7637
jgreene@pooler-ga.gov

Chair-Elect

Reece Turner
Alma-Bacon Co. Rec
PO Box 747
Alma, GA 31510
Office: (912) 632-2851
reecetdawg@hotmail.com

At-Large

Josh Horton
Jeff Davis Co. Rec
83 Buford Rd,
Hazlehurst, GA 31539
Office: (912) 375-6650
josh.horton@jeffdaviscountyga.gov

DISTRICT 3**Chair**

Jeff "Funtime" Fussell
 Sumter Co. Parks & Rec
 408 Rucker Street
 Americus, GA 31719
 Office: (229) 924-4878
jfussell@sumtercountyga.us

Chair-Elect

Keith Morris
 Fitzgerald Dept of Leisure Serv
 816 N Main Street
 Fitzgerald, GA 31750
 Office: (229) 426-5050
kmorris@fitzgeraldga.org

At-Large

Tim Estes
 Sumter Co. Parks & Rec
 408 Rucker Street
 Americus, GA 31719
 Office: (229) 924-7768
tim.estes@sumtercountyga.us

DISTRICT 4**Chair**

Allan Fordham
 Meriwether Co Parks & Rec
 PO Box 420
 Greenville, GA 30222
 Office: (706) 977-7529
a.fordham@meriwethercountyga.gov

Chair-Elect

Kirkland Arnold
 City of College Park
 3636 College Street
 College Park, GA 30337
 Office: (404) 669-3773
karnold@collegeparkga.gov

At-Large

Ora Chism
 City of Carrollton Parks & Rec
 PO Box 532
 Carrollton, GA 30112
 Office (770) 832-1161
ochism@carrollton-ga.gov

DISTRICT 5**Chair**

Steve Roberts
 Dalton Parks & Rec
 904 Civic Dr.
 Dalton, GA 30721
 Office: (706) 278-5404
sroberts@daltonga.gov

Chair-Elect

Jeff Shinall
 Paulding Co. Parks & Rec
 775 Industrial Boulevard
 Dallas, GA 30132
 Office: (770) 443-7540
jeff.shinall@paulding.gov

At-Large

Brian Chastain
 Whitfield Co. Rec
 115 Edwards Park
 Dalton, GA 30721
 Office: (706) 281-1750
bechastain@whitfieldcountyga.com

DISTRICT 6

Chair

Rip Robertson
City of Tucker Parks & Rec
1975 Lakeside Parkway
Tucker, GA 30084
Office: (470)-481-0205
rrobertson@tuckerga.gov

Chair-Elect

Jay Doss
Putnam Co. Rec
140 Recreation Road
Eatonton, GA 31024
Office: (706) 485-8565
jdoss@putnamcountyga.us

At-Large

Bill Waters
Baldwin Co. Parks & Rec
PO Box 607
Milledgeville, GA 31061
Office: (478) 445-0785
bwatersh2o@gmail.com

DISTRICT 7

Chair

Roy Quilliams
Rabun Co. Rec
400 Rabun Park Drive
Tiger, GA 30576
Office: (706) 782-4600
rgquilliams@gmail.com

Chair-Elect

Danielle Schofill
White Co. Rec
327 Asbestos Road
Cleveland, GA 30528
Office: (706) 865-5275
dschofill@whitecountyga.gov

At-Large

Ricky Sanders
Jackson Co. Parks & Rec
441 Gordon Street
Jefferson, GA 30549
Office: (706) 367-6350
rsanders@jacksoncountygov.com

CHAIRS OF THE STATE ATHLETIC COMMITTEE

1964	James A. Colley	Douglas Parks and Recreation Department
1965	Charles E. Ouzts	Macon Recreation Department
1966	Sonny Miller	Brunswick Recreation Department
1967	Sonny Miller	Brunswick Recreation Department
1968	Jim Oates	Cobb County Parks and Recreation
1969	George McEleven	Richmond County Parks and Recreation Department
	Jim Oates	Cobb County Parks and Recreation Department
1970	Sonny Miller	Brunswick Recreation Department
1971	Sonny Miller	Brunswick Recreation Department
1972	Sonny Miller	Brunswick Recreation Department
1973	Charles Webb	Statesboro Recreation Department
1974	Charles Webb	Dalton Parks and Recreation Department
1975	Ronnie R. Young	Carrollton Parks and Recreation Department
1976	Donald NeSmith	Baxley Recreation Department
1980	W. Danny Swain	Evans County Recreation Department
1981	W. Danny Swain	Evans County Recreation Department
1982	Walter Huckaby	Douglas Parks and Recreation Department
1983	Bill Wood	Madison-Morgan County Recreation Department
1984	Ken Farmer	Carrollton Parks and Recreation Department
1985	Ken Farmer	Carrollton Parks and Recreation Department
1986	Ed Smith	Vidalia Recreation and Parks Department
1987	Buck Salter	Richmond County Recreation and Parks Department
1988	Brockey Brock	Albany-Dougherty County Recreation Department
1989	Brockey Brock	Albany-Dougherty County Recreation Department
1990	Buck Salter	Richmond County Recreation and Parks Department
1991	Buck Salter	Richmond County Recreation and Parks Department
1992	Ken Farmer	Carrollton Parks and Recreation Department
1993	Ronnie R. Young	Carrollton Parks and Recreation Department
1994	Bill Wood	Madison-Morgan County Recreation Department
1995	Bill Wood	Madison-Morgan County Recreation Department
1996	Bill Wood	Madison-Morgan County Recreation Department
1997	Buck Salter	Augusta-Richmond County Recreation and Parks
1998	Wayne Gay	Dublin Parks and Recreation Department
1999	Wayne Gay	Dublin Parks and Recreation Department
	Buck Salter	Augusta-Richmond County Recreation and Parks
2000	Buck Salter	Augusta-Richmond County Recreation and Parks
2001	Buck Salter	Augusta-Richmond County Recreation and Parks
2002	Brockey Brock	Valdosta-Lowndes County Recreation and Parks
2003	Brockey Brock	Valdosta-Lowndes County Recreation and Parks
2004	Kim Hamilton	Cherokee County Recreation and Parks Authority
2005	Wayne Gay	Carrollton Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts
2006	Greg Walker	Pickens County Recreation and Parks Department
2007	Bill Wood	Morgan County Parks and Recreation
2008	Randy Spivey	Dublin-Laurens County Recreation Authority

2009	Martha Ann Lumpkin	Warner-Robins Recreation Department
2010	Craig Sowell	Tift County Recreation Department
2011	Randy Spivey	Dublin-Laurens County Recreation Authority
2012	Randy Spivey	Dublin-Laurens County Recreation Authority
2013	James Dodson	Warner-Robins Recreation Department
2014	Wayne Maddox	Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department
2015	Randy Spivey	Dublin-Laurens County Recreation Authority
2016	Drew Torok	Morgan County Recreation Department
2017	Missy Bailey	Gainesville Parks and Recreation Agency
2018	Drew Torok	Morgan County Parks and Recreation Services
2019	Tim Estes	Sumter County Parks and Recreation Department
2020	Craig Sowell	Tift County Recreation
2021	Dadrian Cosby	Statesboro-Bulloch County Parks and Recreation
2022	Jeff Fussell	Sumter County Parks and Recreation
2023	Randy Spivey	Dodge County Recreation Department
2024	Dadrian Cosby	Bulloch County Recreation and Park
2025	John Layng	Carrollton Parks and Recreation Department
2026	Thad Ferguson	Carroll County Recreation

2026 STATE TOURNAMENT HOSTS

YOUTH BASKETBALL			
March 6-7, 2026			
	Class A	Class B	Class C
8U Boys	Whitfield County	Habersham County	Morgan County
	Ryan Hollingsworth, 706-226-8341	Robert Oaks, 678-933-4220	Chris Burden, 706-818-3103
	wcrd@whitfieldcountyga.gov	roaks@habershamga.com	chris.burden@morgancountyga.gov
8U Girls	Whitfield County	Murray County	White County
	Ryan Hollingsworth, 706-226-8341	Mike Caldwell, 706-483-7522	Danielle Schofill, 706-969-1412
	wcrd@whitfieldcountyga.gov	mcaldwell@murraycountyga.gov	dschofill@whitecountyga.gov
10U Boys	Spalding County	Carrollton	Greene County
	Robby Milner, 770-467-4750	Ora Chism, 770-833-7139	Pete O'Neal, 706-817-9215
	rmilner@spaldingcounty.com	ochism@carrollton-ga.gov	poneal@greencountyga.gov
10U Girls	Whitfield County	Tucker	Putnam County
	Ryan Hollingsworth, 706-226-8341	Chris Satterfield, 470-352-1201	Jay Doss, 762-777-0546
	wcrd@whitfieldcountyga.gov	chrissatterfield@tuckerga.gov	jdoss@putnamcountyga.us
10U Boys Major	Henry County	Fort Oglethorpe Robert Keefe, 423-544-8199 rkeefe@fortoglethorpega.gov	
	Darryl Rowe, 404-852-7045		
	dlrowe@henrycountyga.gov		
10U Girls Major	Henry County	No Bid	
	Darryl Rowe, 404-852-7045		
	dlrowe@henrycountyga.gov		
12U Boys	Rockdale County	Effingham County	Washington County
	Otis Key, 770-278-7243	Jeffrey Lonon, 912-754-6399	Aaron McCalvin, 478-357-7157
	otis.key@rockdalecountyga.gov	jlonon@effinghamcounty.org	amccalvin@washingtoncountyga.gov
12U Girls	Spalding County	Habersham County	Morgan County
	Robby Milner, 770-467-4750	Robert Oaks, 678-933-4220	Chris Burden, 706-818-3103
	rmilner@spaldingcounty.com	roaks@habershamga.com	chris.burden@morgancountyga.gov
14U Boys	Rockdale Co.	Effingham Co.	Meriwether County
	Otis Key, 770-278-7243	Jeffrey Lonon, 912-754-6399	Allan Fordham, 706-977-7529
	Otis.key@rockdalecountyga.gov	jlonon@effinghamcounty.org	a.fordham@meriwethercountyga.gov
14U Girls	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid
17U Boys	No Bid	Effingham Co.	No Bid
		Jeffrey Lonon-912-754-6399	
		jlonon@effinghamcounty.org	
17U Girls	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid
Wheelchair	No Bid	No Bid	No Bid

ADULT BASKETBALL*March 13-14, 2026*

	Class A	Class B	Class C
Mens Open	Meriwether County Allan Fordham, 706-977-7529 a.fordham@meriwethercountyga.gov		
Mens 35 And Over	City of College Park Alexis Mcmillan, 404-669-3776 amcmillan@collegeparkga.com		
Women's Open	No Bid		
WheelChair	No Bid		

YOUTH BASEBALL*June 23-27, 2026*

	Class A	Class B	Class C
8U Machine	Bulloch County Recreation Ronnie Melton, 912-690-6833 rmelton@bullochrec.com		Screven Co. Truman Anderson, 912-863-2388 sscrd@planters.net
8U Coach Pitch			Morgan County Chris Burden, 706-818-3103 chris.burden@morgancountyga.gov
10U Machine			Appling Co. Mike Lynn, 912-367-8190 applingrec@gmail.com
10U Live Arm			Morgan County Chris Burden, 706-818-3103 chris.burden@morgancountyga.gov
12U Traditional			Morgan County Chris Burden, 706-818-3103 chris.burden@morgancountyga.gov
12U Major			Bulloch County Recreation Ronnie Melton, 912-690-6833 rmelton@bullochrec.com
14U Live Arm			Morgan County Chris Burden, 706-818-3103 chris.burden@morgancountyga.gov
17U Live Arm			No Bid

YOUTH FASTPITCH SOFTBALL

June 23-27, 2026

	Class A	Class B	Class C
8U Machine	Whitfield County Ryan Hollingsworth, 706-226-8341 wcrd@whitfieldcountyga.com		Appling Co.
8U Coach Pitch			Mike Lynn, 912-367-8190 applingrec@gmail.com
10U Machine			Putnam County
10U Live Arm			Jay Doss, 762-777-0546 jdoss@putnamcountyga.us
12U Live Arm			Screven Co.
14U Live Arm			Truman Anderson, 912-863-2388 sscrd@planters.net
17U Live Arm	No Bid	No Bid	Putnam County Jay Doss, 762-777-0546 jdoss@putnamcountyga.us Adel-Cook Ross Pickle, 229-223-6030 rpickle@cityofadelga.gov Greene County Pete O'Neal, 706-486-2251 poneal@greenecountyga.gov

TRACK AND FIELD

Class A: TBD

Class B/C: May 8-9, 2026

	Class A	Class B	Class C
All	No Bid	Carrollton Ora Chism, 770-833-7139 ochism@carrollton-ga.gov	

ADULT SOFTBALL

Mens: June 5-6, 2026 Coed: June 12-13, 2026

	Class A	Class B	Class C
Men's Open	No Bid		
Men's Church	No Bid		
Coed	No Bid		

YOUTH LACROSSE

All	May 15-17, 2026	No Bid
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TENNIS*Discretion of Host*

All	TBD	Jeff Davis County
		Josh Horton, 912-253-8318
		josh.horton@jeffdaviscountyga.gov

GOLF*Discretion of Host*

All	TBD	Alma-Bacon
		Reece Turner, 912-632-2851
		reece@dawg@hotmail.com

SWIMMING*Date: Dates depending on Class*

	Class A: TBD	Class B/C: July 10-11, 2026
All	No Bid	Moultrie-Colquitt Shyanna Corman, 229-668-0028 Shyanna.corman@mccpra.com

PICKLEBALL

All	<i>September 11-13, 2026</i>	
	Carrollton	
	Katie Mosley, 770-356-1147	
	kmosley@carrollton-ga.gov	

SOCCER*ALL Co-ed & Girls November 20-21, 2026**B/C Co-ed December 4-5, 2026*

	Class A	Class B	Class C
COED All	City of Dalton (All Age Groups)	Wayne County (Co-Ed : 8U, 10U, 12U)	
	Victor Rodriguez-706-671-9882	Speck Echols, 92-427-5915	
	vrodriguez@daltonga.gov	wcrd@waynecountyga.us	
Girls	City of Dalton (All Age Groups)	Catoosa County (Girls : All Age Groups / Co-Ed : 14U)	
	Victor Rodriguez-706-671-9882	Alivia Lopez, 423-660-0361	
	vrodriguez@daltonga.gov	alivia.lopez@catoosa.com	

YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL*NOVEMBER 13-14, 2026*

Boys (All)	Washington County Aaron McCalvin, 478-357-7157 amccalvin@washingtoncountyga.gov
Girls (All)	Washington County Aaron McCalvin, 478-357-7157 amccalvin@washingtoncountyga.gov

TRADITIONAL YOUTH TACKLE FOOTBALL

December 5-6, 2026 & December 12, 2026

	Class A	Class B	Class C
All Ages	Tift County		
	Tim Petrea: 229-382-3262		
	recreation@tiftcounty.org		

VOLLEYBALL

November 13-14, 2026

	Class A	Class B	Class C
8U Girls	Whitfield County	Madison County	
	Ryan Hollingsworth-706-226-8341	Shelley McDaniel, 706-795-6270	
	rhollingsworth@whitfieldcountyga.com	sparham@madisonco.us	
10U Girls	Whitfield County	Madison County	
	Ryan Hollingsworth-706-226-8341	Shelley McDaniel, 706-795-6270	
	rhollingsworth@whitfieldcountyga.com	sparham@madisonco.us	
12U Girls	City of College Park	Carroll County	
	Kirkland Arnold, 404-669-3773	Jeremy Ralston, 770-830-5902	
	karnold@collegeparkga.gov	jralston@carrollcountyga.gov	
14U Girls	Whitfield County	Carroll County	
	Ryan Hollingsworth-706-226-8341	Jeremy Ralston, 770-830-5902	
	rhollingsworth@whitfieldcountyga.com	jralston@carrollcountyga.gov	
17U Girls	Whitfield County	Effingham county	
	Ryan Hollingsworth-706-226-8341	Ronald Smith, 912-429-9004	
	rhollingsworth@whitfieldcountyga.com	rasmith@effinghamcounty.org	

CROSS COUNTRY

October 13, 2025

	Class A	Class B	Class C
Youth All Ages	City of Jefferson		
	Ben Parker, 706-367-5116		
	coachbenparker@gmail.com		

GRPA PRE-TOURNAMENT COACHES/STAFF MEETING SAMPLE

1. Introductions
 - a. Local Staff
 - b. Head Official
 - c. Check for team sign, registration, completed hotel information
 - d. Make sure that copies of birth certificates are available in case of protest
2. Facility Tour
 - a. Name of facility
 - b. Office location
 - c. Hospitality room
 - d. Dressing rooms
 - e. Parking
 - f. First aid
 - g. Restrooms
 - h. Concessions
 - i. Seating arrangements
3. GRPA Rules and Philosophy
 - a. Explanation of classification
 - b. Explanation of rules for specific sport and age group (give out a copy of rules)
 - c. Questions and answers
4. Explanations by Officials
 - a. Introduce Chief Official
 - b. Sportsmanship expected and demanded from players, coaches and fans
 - c. Questions and answers
5. Miscellaneous
 - a. Beverages, towels, trash
 - b. Laundry locations
 - c. Game time – forfeit time
 - d. Home/Visitors designations
 - e. Local staff assistance

NOTE: This is a sample pre-tournament format.

Please remember that the purpose of such a meeting is to orient everyone on the local facilities and to inform coaches and staff of the fact that games will be played strictly by GRPA Rules and Regulations and not local rules. Advise every one of where the athletic manual is located at the tournament and where the rules are in the book.

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES OF GRPA ATHLETICS

It is imperative that each agency, team, or personnel having responsibility for teams and/or individuals entering GRPA competition be familiar with the following guidelines, policies, and procedures of the GRPA State Athletic Committee. All of the items to follow are either required or highly recommended to be followed. When an item is “Highly Recommended” or “Recommended,” the State Committee asks for everyone’s cooperation in following such recommendations.

A child must attain the age of 6 for District and State Competition in any event or sport of GRPA based upon the age control date for that event or sport. All age control dates are either on/before the date listed unless otherwise noted. Age divisions are listed in sections for specific events.

EVENT	AGE	CONTROL DATE	ROSTER LIMIT	PERSONNEL
Basketball	Youth	On September 1 Previous Year	10	2/1 Scorer
Basketball	Adult	On September 1	15	2/1 Scorer
Wheelchair Basketball	Youth	On September 1 Previous Year	15	2/1 Scorer
Wheelchair Basketball	Adult	On September 1	15	2/1 Scorer
Baseball	Youth	On June 30	15	3/1 Bat Boy (4/1 CP)
Swimming	Youth	On May 31	Unlimited	Discretion
Football	Youth	On September 1	30	5 Total
Flag Football	Youth	On September 1	15	5 Total
Flag Football	Adult	On August 30	15	3/1 Water Boy
Lacrosse	Youth	On September 1	Under 12 – (15); Over 12 – (18)	3/1 Water
Softball	Youth	On June 30	15	3/1 Bat Boy (4/1 CP)
Softball	Adult	On September 1	20	3/1 Bat Boy
Volleyball	Youth	On September 1	12	3
Tennis	Youth	On September 1	Unlimited	Discretion
Tennis	Adult	On December 30	Unlimited	Discretion
Track & Field	Youth	On December 31	Unlimited	6 then 1:10
Soccer	Youth	On September 1	12 & Under & Below– (15) 14 & Under & Above – (18)	Discretion
Golf	Youth	On July 31	Unlimited	Discretion
Pickleball	Adult	On December 31	Unlimited	Discretion
Wrestling	Youth	USA Wrestling Rules	Unlimited	Discretion
Kickball	Adult	On September 1	15	3/1 Water Boy
Cross Country	Youth	On December 31	Unlimited	then 1:10
Cheerleading	Youth	On September 1	16	Discretion

1. Entries

- An agency may enter as many teams as it wishes in all divisions, provided the District does not establish an entry limit.
- A District not conducting a district-level tournament or playoff may allow team/s to represent their district per GRPA regulations as stated in Rule 1, Article IV, Section C.
- Entry withdrawals must be made prior to the deadline established by the state athletic committee at that sport’s entry meeting.
- Those Districts entering GRPA state level of competition and who do not fulfill their commitment to send a team or teams to the State Tournament will be responsible for entry fees, forfeits, and fines. Districts/agencies will also have to pay all costs for trophies if the withdrawal causes the cancellation of the tournament/event

2. Participants and Participation

- a. A participant is allowed to compete in one age division only in the same sport/event. Youth participants may compete in an older youth age group provided they remain in the same older group for all games AND through all levels of competition. In tennis, adults are allowed to compete in a younger adult division under the same specifications of participation.
- b. A participant may compete in district and state competition, provided he/she is not in violation of any rules or regulations in this manual.
- c. There is no mandatory participation requirement in any GRPA sport.
- d. Only persons whose names are approved on their agency's GRPA Official Roster, who meet all eligibility requirements, and who are representing an agency not on current suspension for that sport in question may compete in GRPA events. Youth participants can only be submitted on one GRPA Roster per sport/event.
- e. The use of ineligible players, in accordance with the rules in this Manual, shall result in immediate forfeiture from an event. Burden of proof rests with the protesting agency's representative person. Any agency caught playing an illegal player will be suspended for one competition year in that sport.

3. Hardship Committee Guidelines

- a. The committee will consist of eight members. The committee will consist of a chairperson appointed by the State Athletic Chair, District Athletic Chairs from D2, D4, and D6 (even years), and district chair-elects from D1, D3, D5, and D7. The district chairs and chair-elects' composure will rotate from year to year. The initial committee composition in 2013 was (4) district chairs from D1, D3, D5 and D7 and (3) district chair-elects from D2, D4, and D6.
- b. The committee shall meet on an as needed basis. The committee will meet on the same day prior to the State Athletic Committee entry meeting.
- c. Request to Hardship Committee shall be to set aside a rule or rules in the manual for the benefit of individuals or agencies. **The Agency's request must be submitted to the State Athletic Chair in writing one week prior to the scheduled SAC entries meeting.** The agency requesting consideration **MUST** be represented by a full-time employee, which must also be a GRPA member, at the Hardship meeting. The agency's request will not be heard if said representation is not present. Documentation is requested to support agencies' requests. If a **full-time employee** cannot attend due to extreme circumstances, the district athletic representative will be allowed to represent the agency.
- d. The chairperson of the Hardship Committee will vote only in the event of a tie.
- e. All classification appeals must go to the Hardship Committee by the due date (**at least 30 days prior to state athletic meeting**) with district recommendations. The Hardship Committee will present to the full Athletic Committee for final approval by two-thirds vote.
- f. Decisions of the Hardship Committee must be approved by majority to take to the State Athletic Committee for final approval. Decisions made by the Hardship Committee, also called the Full Committee, shall not be considered as setting a precedent for any other request. Each request will stand on its own merit. The approval of the full athletic committee must be a simple **majority**.

- g. Every request to the Athletic Committee shall be considered.
 - h. Age Control Dates are not an item considered for Hardship or Appeals.
 - i. Child hardships, once granted, stay with agency/child through uninterrupted playing career with agency.
 - j. The GRPA State Athletic Committee is the final authority.
4. Creation of an Appeals Committee – This committee would be established to work in conjunction with the Hardship Committee. The Chairperson of the Suspension Sub-Committee would be the Chair. Members of the Appeal Review Committee would consist of the Suspension Chair and At Large Members of the SAC.
5. The purpose of this committee would be to review all appeals of decisions rendered by the SAC as requested. They would also assist in reviewing the incident and tournament reports along with Protest Reports to determine if any further action/s should be recommended to the Full SAC.
- a. After hearing the appeal, the Appeal Committee would make a recommendation to uphold the penalties established by the SAC or dismiss the case upon reviewing all reports and hearing from parties involved.
 - b. Parties that disagree with the Appeal Committee decision may appeal to the Full SAC. Their decision would be final.
 - c. Parties that wish to appeal the SAC original decision will have to submit the agency/ individual request to the State Athletic Chair in writing one week prior to the scheduled SAC entries meeting. The agency requesting consideration **MUST** be represented by a full-time employee, which must also be a GRPA member, at the Appeal review proceedings. The agency's request will not be heard if said representation is not present. Documentation is requested to support agencies' requests. If a **full-time employee/ Individual** cannot attend due to extreme circumstances, the district athletic representative will be allowed to represent the agency or submit written information regarding the request.
 - d. The Chair of the Committee (current Suspension Sub-committee Chair) will vote in case of a tie.
 - e. Any decision of the Appeals Committee that is appealed shall be referred to the full SAC. To overturn the decision, a simple majority of the SAC present must vote in favor of the appeal for it to be overruled.
 - f. The Appeal Committee shall not be considered as setting a precedent when reviewing appeal cases but will handle on a case by case basis upon reviewing information presented at the Review Hearing. Each request will stand on its own merit.
 - g. Requests to the State Athletic Appeals Committee shall be heard prior to the SAC Meeting on the same day as the SAC convenes unless extenuating circumstances are made known by the GRPA Executive Director or State Athletic Committee Chairperson. If the Decision of the Appeal Committee is appealed to the Full SAC and approved by a simple majority of those present their decision is the final authority.
- Appeal Process
- i. Appeals must be made to the GRPA State Athletic Committee Chairman.
 - ii. Intent to appeal must be in writing to the GRPA SAC Chair and the GRPA Appeals Chair within 72 hours.

- iii. Appeal process will use hearing guidelines.
- k. Review Hearing Procedures
 - i. Notification of the hearing as deemed appropriate by State Athletic Committee Chair and Appeals Chair. (One week - prefer two work weeks- prior to GRPA SAC Meeting).
 - ii. Follow all the procedures outlined concerning PROTESTS and APPEALS as set forth in the GRPA SAC Manual and Sport Specific Rule Books [ie: GHSA or Federation Sport Specific Rules].
 - iii. Persons involved in the incident in question may:
 - 1. Represents himself or herself in person at the Review meeting. (Maximum of five (5) minutes to present case).
 - 2. Have the Chairman of the Appeal Committee read a statement on behalf of the party that cannot be present at the meeting.
 - 3. In either case, all concerned parties must have legibly written or typed statements available at the GRPA SAC Appeal meeting.
 - 4. Committee may call /request additional witnesses as deemed necessary (umpires, supervisor, etc.)
 - iv. Each party involved may have a maximum of two witnesses to state the case as they see it. Only one person will be allowed in the meeting room at a time.
 - v. Procedure of protest review:
 - 1. Accusing party (1 person) states case. (5 minutes limit)
 - 2. Defending party (1 person) states case. (5 minutes limit)
 - 3. Witnesses for accusing party states case. (5 minutes limit)
 - 4. Witnesses for defending party state case. (5 minutes limit)
 - 5. AAC members question the concerned parties.
 - 6. Everyone exits the meeting room except GRPA SAC Chair, Appeal Chair and members of the Appeal Committee.
 - 7. Appeal committee members vote on the issue.
 - 8. Concerned parties will be notified in person if present or in writing of the SAC Appeal Committee decision within Seventy Two (72) hours of the hearing.
 - vi. No GRPA Appeal Committee member shall discuss any pending hearing with any person outside of the committee.
- l. Discussions involving Ineligible players:
 - i. Once discovered the team/agency should file a formal protest with the Tournament/ Event Director.
 - ii. If the protest is during a District Event the District Athletic Reps and Tournament/Event Staff will handle the protest.
 - iii. If the protest is made during a GRPA Sanctioned Event the GRPA State Protest Committee (Current SAC Chair, Past Chair, Chair Elect, ED, and any Past Chair Serving) will be convened with Local Agency Tournament/Event Staff Involved. If a GRPA SAC Member is present, they will help conduct the protest. If they

are not present, then the GRPA SAC Chair will conduct the proceedings. These proceedings may be on a conference call or zoom meeting pending options available at the time.

- iv. Agency will automatically go on probation if use of ineligible players is confirmed until the SAC Appeals Committee can convene (Coaches Names - mx 3 need to be on the GRPA Roster, we have been given incorrect info in the past). Depending on the severity of the situation action can be taken against the Coaching Staff.
- v. For second offense the Agency and Coach will automatically be on Suspension for a minimum of one year. Further action can be taken at the review hearing against the agency and coach as deemed necessary by the Committee.
- vi. For Flagrant and Safety situations stricter penalties may be imposed immediately up to and including indefinite suspension for all GRPA sponsored tournaments/events.
- vii. Once the Review Hearing is scheduled and conducted prior ruling/s will be taken into consideration before additional fines, penalties, suspensions invoked.
- viii. Incident / Protests Reports must be submitted. Ineligible players can be protested at any time.

6. District Tournaments, Pairings and Special Game Rules

- a. Each district shall conduct its own tournament or playoff for each division by GRPA manual rules. The District must follow the rules of the game. The intention is to supply rules for game play, not how the tournaments are organized.
- b. Pairings for all state tournaments will be determined by the State Athletic Bracket Committee, except individual sports, and with the Host Team or District representative playing an adjacent district representative in a game on the first day.
- c. Youth activities cannot be originally scheduled for Sunday except for tackle football.
- d. Game times are forfeit times.
- e. The host team in a state tournament shall be a team from the host agency unless the tournament is being hosted by a different class then the district shall select a host from the proper classification.

7. Sportsmanship and Conduct (Detailed description pages 50-62 and pertains to all GRPA sports)

- a. For all GRPA competitions at the district or state level, positive cheering by players, coaches and spectators is encouraged. Any negative cheering/hollering may result in a warning and/or removal from the site, whether it is for or against your team. No artificial noisemakers shall be allowed in the dugouts, bleachers, seats and standing areas around the perimeter of the competition in all youth sports. The tournament director is empowered with the authority to make the final decision.
- b. No use of tobacco in any form is permitted on the competition area or on the bench by participants, coaches or officials, regardless of local rules.
- c. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected, or in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event. A forfeited

(not played) game shall not be counted as a sit-out game for an ejected player.

7. All youth team and individual sports must have a certified coach (certified in the sport coaching) or a full-time staff person who is a GRPA member with their team, except under extenuating circumstances, which will be determined by the tournament director. This person must be on playing area and available at all times (dugout, bench, etc.).

- a. Sports

- i. Basketball – NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, Coach Safely
- ii. Track & Field - NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, USA TRACK, Coach Safely
- iii. Tennis - NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, Coach Safely
- iv. Baseball - NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, HIGHER GROUND, DOYLE, MVP, USA BASEBALL VIP, Coach Safely
- v. Softball - NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, HIGHER GROUND, DOYLE, MVP, USA SOFTBALL VIP, Coach Safely
- vi. Swimming/Diving – Youth swim coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA- swimming, ACEP, GHSA, US Swimming or American Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches in conjunction with any nationally recognized lifeguard certification program, NCAA COACHES, ASCA or staff member. Youth dive coaches must be certified by either AAU or USA Diving. , Coach Safely
- vii. Golf - NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, Coach Safely
- viii. Volleyball – NYSCA, GHSA, USA VOLLEYBALL, Coach Safely
- ix. Football - NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, USA FOOTBALL, Coach Safely
- x. Soccer – NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, GYSA, US YOUTH SOCCER, Coach Safely
- xi. Pickleball – Coach Safely
- xii. Kickball – Coach Safely
- xiii. Wrestling - NYSCA, GHSA, USA WRESTLING, Coach Safely
- xiv. Cross Country – NYSCA, GHSA, NFHS, USA TRACK, Coach Safely

- b. The certified person's name or full-time staff member, who is a member of GRPA, must appear on the official roster signed by the agency director.

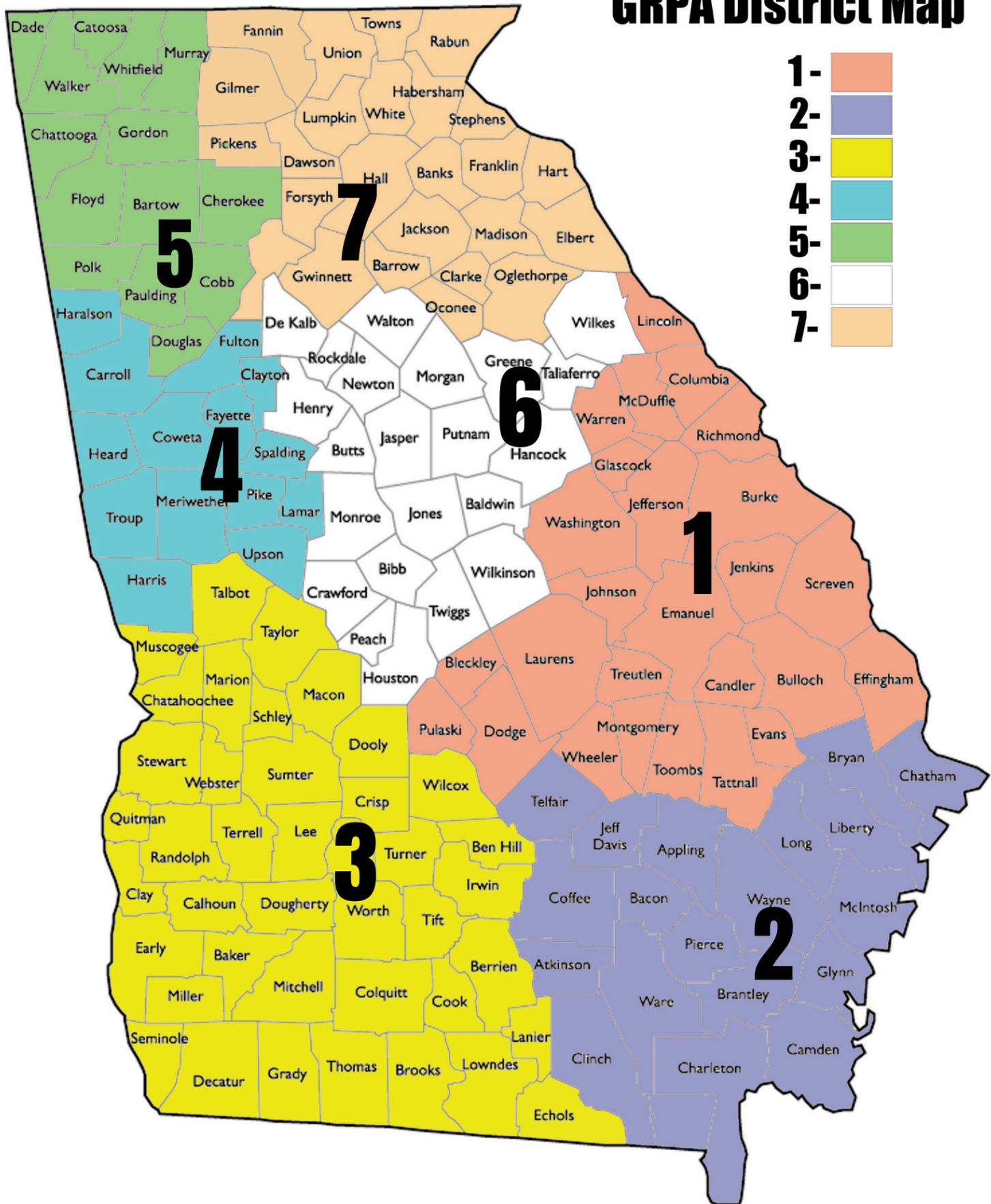
- c. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their department. By signing the team's GRPA roster, the department director or their designee attests that this has taken place.

8. Manual changes will be taken every two years (even years) with the next changes in 2018. All odd year changes may be made for typos or national governing body changes (i.e., ASA, NFA, GHSA, etc.). Any other changes in odd years must be approved by 75% of those state athletic committee members present. **Proposed rule changes for 2026 are to be to GRPA by August 1, 2025.**

The Athletic Manual is reviewed yearly with Rule Change requests received and voted upon every two years. Rules changes are voted on by simple majority for those rules that were submitted on time and distributed for review prior to the meeting. For any rule change that is made from the floor or requested by agency members on the date of the meeting must be approved by 2/3 of the members present for the rule to be adopted. Any rule changes made during non-rule change submittals will follow Robert's Rule of Order, as amended. For any matter to be reconsidered it must be motioned and seconded by the prevailing party and passed

by 2/3 of members present. After motion is back on the floor it will follow Robert's Rules of Order as amended and be subject to a simple majority vote. Rule changes that are made by National Governing Bodies that affect GRPA Athletic Manual will be voted on by the Committee during non- rule change year by simple majority

9. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.
10. Use of drones of any type is not allowed during any GRPA events.



2026 STATE ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR

District completed minimum of 10 days prior to State beginning with Spring Sports for 2026.

Date	Event	Location
December 4, 2025	State Tournaments Awarded	Griffin
January 5-7	GRPA President's Assembly/GRPA BOT	Griffin
January 21	SAC Meeting (Winter Entries- Basketball)	Moultrie
March 6-7	State Youth Basketball Championships	
March 13-14	State Adult Basketball Championships	
March 20-21	Adult 35& Over Basketball Championships	
April 8	SAC Meeting (Track, Lacrosse)	Helen
April 24-25	Class A State Track Meet (alternates each year)	
May 1-2	Class B/C State Track Meet (alternates each year)	
May 4-6	GRPA BOT/ Committee Meetings	Gainesville
May 15-17	State Lacrosse Championships (All Classifications)	
May 22	SAC Meeting (BB/SB, Swim, Pickleball, Tennis, Golf)	Warner Robins
Discretion of Host	Golf, Tennis, Kickball & Pickleball (Youth & Adult)	
June 1	Earliest Date District BB/ SB Tournaments Begin (8U - 17U)	
June 5-6	Adult Softball State Tournaments	
June 12-13	Adult Specialty Softball Tournaments (40 & Over, Co-ed)	
June 22	Earliest Date to conduct District Swim Meets	
June 23-27	States Youth Baseball/ Softball Championships (8U - 17U)	
July 4	All District Swim Meets <u>MUST</u> have been held and completed	
July 10-11	Class B/C Swim Meet	
July 17-18	Class A State Swim Meet	
August 1	Proposed Rule Change Deadline	Send to GRPA Office
September 2-3	SAC Meeting (Rule Changes)	Savannah
September 7-9	GRPA BOT/ Committee Meetings	Statesboro
September 11-13	State Pickleball (Entries should be emailed by July 30 th)	
October 3	State Cross Country Meet	
October 7	SAC Meeting (Fall Entries)	Canton
November 2-5	GRPA Annual Conference	Athens
November 6	GRPA State Tournament Bid Submittal Deadline	Send to GRPA Office
November 13-14	State Cheerleading & Youth/ Adult Volleyball	
November 13-14	State Youth Flag Football Championships (Boys & Girls)	
November 20-21	State Youth Soccer Championships- ALL Class A & All Girls	
December 4-5	State Youth Soccer Championships- ALL Class B/C	
December 5-6 & 12	State Youth Football	

AGENCY AND FORFEIT WITHDRAWAL FEES/FINES

1. There is an annual agency membership fee due by January 30. After this date, a late fee will be added.
2. Any team who shows up to a GRPA district or state tournament wearing illegal uniforms or utilizing illegal equipment will be assessed a fine of \$200. If a team has enough legal players to participate, they will be allowed to play and the other members would have to sit out until their uniforms/equipment meets guidelines per various sport rules. If they do not have enough to play then they would have to forfeit (forfeit fees apply). **PLEASE CHECK SPECIFIC SPORT RULES** concerning violations of uniforms and how penalties will be assessed. GRPA reserves the right to fine any agency not adhering to uniform guidelines in GRPA play. i.e. Basketball is a technical foul for every illegal uniform each game upon entry.
3. Any ejection of a youth or adult coach or adult player will result in a \$100.00 fine, payable to the GRPA office. Any **GRPA Agency Director, staff member, or agency personnel** who is **ejected from a GRPA event** (District or State) will be subject to a **\$250.00 fine**.
 - If the ejection occurs at a **District Tournament**, checks should be made payable to the **District hosting the tournament**.
 - If the ejection occurs at a **State Tournament**, checks should be made payable to the **GRPA Office**.
4. Any team that pulls players off the field/court will be assessed the full forfeit fee of \$500.00 with normal distribution of the fee; \$225 of the fee goes to the host.
5. Forfeit, withdrawal, and non-notification fees.
 - a. The agency may appeal probation before the athletic committee.
 - i. These fees apply to no shows and intentional forfeits. In the event of a forfeit or withdrawal after the bracket is drawn in a state competition, the team will be required to pay the following:
 - 1st Forfeit – Entry fee to the state host and a \$500 forfeit fee with \$225 going to the host from the GRPA office. The forfeiting agency will be placed on probation for one year in the age group for the particular sport.
 - 2nd Forfeit (within a 24 month period) – Entry fee to the state host and a \$1000 forfeit fee with \$450 going to the host from the GRPA office. The forfeiting agency will be placed on suspension for one year from that sport.
 - ii. Forfeits during pool play would be a forfeit fee of \$750.00 payable to host.
 - b. Districts entering GRPA state level of competition that do not fill their commitment to send a team or teams to the State Tournament will be responsible for forfeits, fines and trophies if the withdrawal causes the cancellation of the tournament/event.
 - c. Any team that abandons their position in a GRPA tournament/event will be subject to suspension pending an investigation by GRPA State Athletic Committee.
6. Scratch fees for track and swimming are \$10.00 per person per event payable to GRPA.
7. A certified coach or staff member must be in attendance at all State events. Failure to have a certified coach or full-time staff member is:

1st Offense: \$100	2nd Offense: \$200	3rd Offense: \$500
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8. Failure to attend mandatory statewide swim and/or track meetings/webinars will result in a \$200 fine payable to the GRPA state office. It is **“Strongly Recommended”** that both an agency member and swim coach from each agency or team attends a swim meeting/s/webinar to ensure that all necessary parties are clear on any rule changes or clarification.

FEES FOR STATE TOURNAMENTS AND STATE HOSTS

SPORT	DIVISION	EVENT TYPE	ENTRY FEE	STATE HOST FEE
Basketball	Youth	Pool Play/Single Elimination	\$ 305.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
	Adult	Single Elimination	\$ 255.00	\$ 150.00 for 9 or more \$ 100.00 for 8 or less
Wheelchair Basketball	Youth	Pool Play/Single Elimination	\$305.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
	Adult	Single Elimination	\$255.00	\$ 150.00 for 9 or more \$ 100.00 for 8 or less
Baseball	8U - 12U	Double Elimination	\$305.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
	14U - 17U	Double Elimination	\$355.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
Slow Pitch Softball	All Youth	Double Elimination	\$ 305.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
	All Adult	3 Game Guarantee	\$380.00	\$250.00 for 9 or more \$175.00 for 8 or less
Fast Pitch Softball	8U - 12U	Double Elimination	\$ 305.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
	14U - 17U	Double Elimination	\$355.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
Tackle Football	Youth	Single Elimination	\$255.00	\$75.00 per tournament
Flag Football	Youth	Pool Play/Single Elimination	\$305.00	\$100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
	Adult	Pool Play	\$ 255.00	\$ 250.00 for 9 or more \$ 175.00 for 8 or less
Volleyball	Youth	Double Elimination	\$ 305.00	\$ 125.00 for 9 or more \$ 95.00 for 8 or less
	Adult	Double Elimination	\$305.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 70.00 for 8 or less
Soccer	Youth	Pool Play/Single Elimination	\$ 305.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
Swimming	Youth	Individual	\$7 per event	75.00 per team
		Relay Team	\$15 per relay	
	A \$6 per participant charge will be added to cover US Swim sanctioning fees.			
Tennis	Youth	Singles, Doubles, Mixed	\$10 per event	75.00 per team
	Adult		\$30 per event	
Golf	Youth	Individual – No Handicap	\$15 for 9 holes \$20 for 18 holes	\$ 5.00 per participant
	Adult	Individual - Handicap	\$25 per day	\$ 5.00 per participant
Track & Field	Youth	Individual	\$7 per event	75.00 per team
	Youth	Relay	\$ 15 per relay	
	A \$6 per participant charge will be added to cover electronic timing device if utilized.			
Lacrosse	Youth	Single Elimination	\$ 205.00	\$ 100.00 for 9 or more \$ 75.00 for 8 or less
Pickleball	Youth	Singles	\$30 for one event \$15 for every additional event	20% Entry Fee
	Adult	Doubles	\$30 for one event \$15 for every additional event	
	A \$2.00 per participant charge will be added to cover the use of https://pickleballbrackets.com/pts.aspx			
Kickball	Adult	Single Elimination	\$305.00	\$75.00 for 9 or more \$50.00 for 8 or less
		Double Elimination		\$150.00 for 9 or more \$100 for 8 or less
Wrestling	Youth	Individual	\$7.00-\$15.00 per match	20% Entry Fee
Cross Country	Youth	Individual	\$10 per person	20% Entry Fee

QuickScores Fees

- Each district pays \$800 annually to the GRPA office, payable by March 1st of each year.
- For District Level Competition Agencies may be charged \$5.00 per team payable to district host.
- This would depend on if your district is trying to recover the expense for budget purposes.

50% late charge to all agencies not paying their entire entry by the time the state tournament or competition is completed. Purchase orders not paid within 30 days are considered late.

State Tournament Gate Fees: The following gate fees can be charged for GRPA State Tournaments:

Children (5 and under) - Free

Students (6 to 17)- \$4.00

Adults (18 to 60)- \$8.00

Seniors (61 and Up) - Free

Gate fees can be charged or a parking fee not to exceed \$8.00 per car. Both a gate and a parking fee cannot be charged.

Collection of Forfeit Fees and Fines:

The GRPA State Athletic Committee, at its September 6-7, 2023 Rule Change Meetings, adopted the following process to collect forfeit fees, fines and other monetary charges to begin in January 2024. Please share this process with your district. Please review the following six (6) steps and if you have any questions, please contact the State Athletic Chairperson.

1. Any forfeit fees, fines, ejection fines, etc. will be sent from the State Athletic Chairman to the GRPA office.
2. The GRPA office will invoice each District that has a fine.
3. Each District will be responsible for sending payment for the amount of the fines for their district to the GRPA office.
(At this point: GRPA has collected the fines and fees from each District).
4. Each District will then have the responsibility of collecting those fees from the member agencies within their own district to reimburse what has been paid out of the District treasury to cover those fines & fees.
5. Each District will also have the responsibility to collect the entry fees from forfeiting agencies and sending the
6. host their portion of the fees. The District would keep their portion of the forfeit fees which were paid out to the GRPA State Office *(from Step 3)*
7. If a District entering a team at the GRPA level withdraws from an event and their withdrawal causes the state tournament to be cancelled for a lack of participation: the cost of awards would also be invoiced to the District. The District, at this point, would collect those fees from the withdrawing agency.

CALENDAR FOR DISTRICT/STATE TOURNAMENT COMPETITION

State Tournament weekends start on Fridays unless otherwise specified.

Sport	Division	District	State
Wrestling	Youth & Adult	Ten days prior to State	2nd Saturday in February
Basketball	Youth	Ten days prior to State	1st Weekend in March
	Adult	Ten days prior to State	2nd Weekend in March
Wheelchair Basketball	Youth	Ten days prior to State	3rd Weekend in March
	Adult	Ten days prior to State	3rd Weekend in March
Track & Field	A & B/C	Second Weekend in April	Host has the option to hold the meet between the 3rd weekend in April and the 3rd weekend in May
Lacrosse	Youth	Ten days prior to State	3rd weekend in May (unless falls on holiday, then approved by chair of SAC)
Baseball	Youth	Ten days prior to State	4th Tuesday – Saturday in June
Softball	Youth	Ten days prior to State	4th Tuesday – Saturday in June
	Adult (Slow)	Ten days prior to State	4th Friday-Sunday in June (Church only on Friday)
	Adult (Special/Slow)	Ten days prior to State	3rd Saturday-Sunday in June
Swimming	Youth	Between 4th Mon. in June & 1st Sat. in July (prefer 10 days prior to state)	B/C – 2nd Weekend in July A – 3rd Weekend in July
Golf	Youth & Adult	Ten days prior to State	Host Discretion
Tennis	Youth & Adult	Ten days prior to State	Host Discretion
Kickball	Adult	Ten days prior to State	No earlier than 2nd Weekend in September
Pickleball	Youth & Adult	Ten days prior to State	No earlier than 2nd weekend in September
Cross Country	Youth	Ten days prior to State	Host Discretion in October
Flag Football	Youth Girls	Ten days prior to State	2nd weekend in November
	Adult		
Volleyball	Youth & Adult	Ten days prior to State	2nd weekend in November
	Co-Ed	Ten days prior to State	
Cheerleading	Youth	Ten days prior to State	2nd Weekend in November
Soccer	Youth	Ten days prior to State	ALL CLASS & B/C Girls-The weekend before Thanksgiving B/C Co-ed- 1st Fri/Sat in December
Football	Youth	Ten days prior to State	1st Sat./Sun. in December & 2nd Sat/Sun. in December

In the event a state tournament cannot be completed within the scheduled time frame and more than 40 percent of the scheduled games have been completed, the following procedures may be used to break ties among teams in the same spot in the bracket. The tournament may be extended by the Tournament Director after conferring with the State Athletic Committee Chairman.

1. The team that advanced the farthest in the winner's bracket.
2. Win-lose records, except among undefeated teams.
3. If only two teams are tied for a position and have played each other, the winner of that game. EXCEPTION: If Championship must be played or the teams shall be declared co-champions.
4. The teams shall be ranked according to the fewest runs allowed per game played.
5. If a tie still exists, the team shall be ranked according to the most runs scored per game played.
6. If a tie still exists, by a coin toss.

GRPA YOUTH STATE AWARDS

All awards for GRPA state tournaments must be purchased from the official awards vendors that are approved by the State Athletic Committee and Board of Trustees.

1. Single Elimination Tournaments:
 - a. 1st and 2nd place team trophies and individual medals (roster limit plus 2)
2. Double Elimination Tournaments:
 - a. 1st and 2nd place team trophies and individual medals
3. In Swimming and Track:
 - a. Individual medals will be awarded for 1st-3rd place
 - b. Ribbons will be awarded for 4th-8th place
 - c. State meet host must provide an awards podium for 1st-8th place
4. In Golf and Tennis:
 - a. Champion and Runner Up medals awarded.

Trophies will be delivered to the State Host at least one week in advance. The GRPA State Trophy Representative is:

Awards South
Peggi Boatwright
912-489-2631
awardssouth@yahoo.com

GRPA ADULT STATE AWARDS

1. Single Elimination Tournaments:
 - 1st and 2nd place: team trophies and individual t-shirts
2. Double Elimination Tournaments:
 - a. 1st and 2nd place: team trophies and individual t-shirts

*Adult Host must work directly with state approved trophy vendor to finalize adult tournament trophy orders.

RULE I – PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY OF AGENCIES

SECTION A – GRPA MEMBERSHIP

1. Agencies must be members in good standing and all fees paid with the GRPA, Inc., to participate in the functions of its athletic programs. This includes both District and State membership dues.
2. An agency is defined as any agency organized for the purpose of providing recreation and parks services for a particular community and aligning its aims and objectives consistent with those of GRPA, Inc. To be eligible for agency membership, an agency must employ a full-time salaried director and sponsor a variety of activities and programs which are well distributed throughout the year.
 - a. An agency may join as a provisional member if approved by the Board of Trustees and may participate in all activities for a period of two years.
3. To become a member of GRPA, agencies must make an application to the GRPA Membership Committee and be approved by the Board of Trustees. Annual membership dues are required and must be paid to the

GRPA, Inc.
1285 Parker Road
Conyers, GA 30094-5957

Further information may be obtained by calling (770) 760-1403 or FAX (770) 760-1550.

4. An agency shall be eligible to participate in athletics upon the receipt of the GRPA membership fee and all district fees after membership has been approved. (NOTE: Each GRPA district establishes its own entry deadlines for GRPA athletic activities on a district level. Therefore, to be eligible for athletic participation, new agencies must be approved for membership and request entry for the athletic playoffs prior to the district entry deadline. Such requests for entry are to be made to the respective District Commissioner or the designated person and must be approved by the Board of Trustees). New agencies can participate provided they are approved prior to the appropriate district athletic draw.

ARTICLE II – ELIGIBILITY OF INDIVIDUALS AND TEAMS

SECTION A – LOCAL PARTICIPATION

1. Teams and individuals participating in the athletic functions of GRPA must be an integral part of an agency's local program before they are eligible to represent that agency in GRPA competitions **with all youth achieving the age of 6 by the age control date for a particular athletic event. There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.**
 - a. An “integral part of an agency's local program” is defined as individuals who participated during their current season in the activity in question and under staff supervision of that agency. Participation means registering and being a part of that agency's program as required by the local Director. All participants must have registered and be an integral part of the agency program no less than 45 days prior to the state tournament.
 - b. Agencies shall not recruit players for the sole purpose of competing in GRPA athletic functions.
 - c. An all-star team must be composed of players from teams that are an integral part of an agency's local program. Likewise, any individual that represents an agency in GRPA competition in track & field, swimming, diving, tennis, and golf must also be an integral part of the agency's local program.
 - d. If an agency enters a team (only team from agency/ no all-star selection completed in

age division) that will advance straight to state the agency must provide proof of participant registration through the agency entering the team. This documentation is due at district entry meeting/deadline and signed off by the district athletic chairman.

2. Eligibility involving local participation is left to the integrity of the agency director. The Director shall be prepared to make available substantial proof of local participation through such means as scorebooks, registration materials, agency records, news releases, or such other evidence requested by the State Athletic Committee Chair or the District Commissioner from the agency's district.
3. In the absence of enough participation locally to constitute a league, an agency may contract with another agency to allow participation of a team or must hold an announced public registration in that activity to establish eligibility of local participation.
4. All youth sports teams must have with their teams at least one certified coach or full-time staff person who is a member of GRPA. This person must be on the playing area (dugouts, bench, etc.) and available at all times, except under extenuating circumstances which will be determined by the tournament director.
5. Per the "Return to Play Act of 2013," effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.

Refer to page 15 for approved certification programs.

SECTION B – PARTICIPATION BOUNDARIES

1. For Adult Open Division: All players must be an integral part of an agency's local program. Players must live or work/attend school full time in the State of Georgia.
 - a. **EXCEPTION:** See Adult Pickleball rules for eligibility information.
 - b. **For Church Competition:** the church must participate and be an integral part of the agency's program. The church's physical location must be in the state of Georgia.
 - c. **For Youth Competition:**
 - i. All players must participate in the county in which they reside/live (with a parent or legal guardian) or go to school full time. "If the player's parents are divorced and the court has awarded joint custody of the child, the player is eligible to play for the agency/county where either parent resides." Youth cannot establish eligibility by employment. Summer school or part-time employment will not be used to determine eligibility requirements from Grades K-12. **Check individual sport sections for eligibility requirements.**
 - ii. Youth teams may play in either class A, B, or C according to their county's population or per their appeals to another classification.
 - iii. If a current full time GRPA professional of 1 or more years of a GRPA member agency has a child who plays in that agency's program but does not attend school or reside in that county, he or she will be eligible for youth GRPA competition in all sports.
 - d. **Youth Team Sports:** For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions:
 - i. Home/County, or Agency has no program.
 - ii. Cannot cross district lines.
 - iii. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.

- iv. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
- v. Host agency must endorse participant.
- vi. Participant must be approved by the District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
- vii. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home/County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.

2. Eligibility Definitions

a. **RESIDE:** Shall mean the permanent residence of a participant within a geographic locale, such as a city or a county for a period of sixty (60) days prior to the beginning of the State Tournament. Exception: Under extenuating circumstances, children may participate provided residency is established with a parent and/or legal guardian, but must meet all other criteria for participation. Once a player meets criteria as a resident and plays in District, he/she is eligible through State to play in youth and adult programs. The construction of a home or dwelling in anticipation of moving from one county to another, or the signature of a lease in anticipation of moving from one county to another does not constitute eligibility. The actual date of occupancy shall constitute the completion of a move. Ownership of land, buildings, property, dwellings, or the possession of a post office box in more than one county does not constitute eligibility and in no case does the possession of a post office box constitute eligibility.

- i. The enrollment in a school in advance of attendance at no time constitutes the establishment of eligibility. Eligibility is established once actual attendance has begun. Registering to be home schooled does NOT make you eligible for GRPA until that county's Board of Education starts classes.

3. **WORK:** Shall mean the ongoing, gainful employment, on a full-time basis, enjoyed by a salaried employee. Service contract employment, investment, stock-holdings, etc., shall not be constructed to mean "gainful employment." A person shall be employed for a period of forty- five (45) days prior to the beginning of the State Tournament and must work a minimum of 30 hours per week. In "multi-location" industries or branch offices, a person shall not claim "multi- county" eligibility status. He shall be deemed for the work eligibility according to the following tests: (a) his branch location, (b) his assignment per personnel directory, (c) extraction of transportation, (d) receipt of pay, not the source of payroll, and (e) location of his primary office. A salesman and/or a person in specialized services who travels an area, district, or region, such as an insurance person or road test engineer, shall deem his permanent residence as his work locale, unless he meets all previous tests.

4. **ATTEND SCHOOL FULL-TIME** – shall mean a student of a full-time elementary or secondary education system or facility. Post-secondary students (college or vocational) shall mean those students attending college or vocational school on a full-time basis. A full-time student must attend at least three quarters per year or two semesters with a minimum of twelve (12) hours per quarter/semester to be considered a full-time student. Summer school will not be used to establish eligibility for Grades K-12. Students who are home schooled must play in county of legal residency or in county they are registered with the board of education as home schooled.

- a. The enrollment in a school in advance of attendance at no time constitutes the establishment of eligibility. Eligibility is established once actual attendance has begun. Registering to be home schooled does NOT make you eligible for GRPA until that county's Board of Education starts classes.

SECTION C – PROFESSIONAL AND SEMI-PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES

1. Students who participate on a college or university's varsity, or freshmen team, which competes with other colleges, are not eligible for GRPA competition in the same sport.
2. If a local league is organized which allows participation by inter-collegiate team members of the same sport, the local league must be sanctioned by the NCAA. (Example: Summer Basketball League)
3. Regardless of intercollegiate participation during the normal school year, a college or university student is eligible for summer athletic functions sponsored by GRPA, provided the student is not currently representing a college in competition between other schools, and provided he/she meets all other GRPA eligibility requirements.
4. No professional athlete will be allowed to participate in that sport during the time they are under professional contract.

SECTION D – ADULT, CHURCH, INDUSTRIAL, AND OPEN DIVISIONS

1. For church adult divisions in basketball, softball, and volleyball, participants must be minister-approved members. Church must be physically located in the State of Georgia.
 - a. The church team's official GRPA Roster must be approved by the signature of the sponsoring church's minister. The signature of the agency director or superintendent shall appear next to the signature of the minister.
 - b. Only church teams are eligible to represent an agency in GRPA Church Divisions. No all-star teams are allowed, but a church is allowed to "pick up" additional players who did participate with a team in the agency's local program from that church during the regular season and for the purpose of playing in GRPA church competition. No league all-stars may play. Players must have competed in the agency's local sport-specific program and meet all other GRPA requirements to participate in church play.

CHURCH –A GRPA church team is a team composed of people from one church (no all-star league team) or people from several teams all from the same church who are all minister-approved members of that church. The requirement for the church membership is determined by the local church, its pastor/minister and/or governing board.

A church is an organization set up to conduct public worship services conducted at a congregation and led by the clergyman. This organization must be recognized by a national, state, or local religious ministerial association to be considered a church. A group of people from an organization set up for the purpose of conducting civic responsibilities will not be considered a church for GRPA competition.

If a player meets all the qualifications to be a legal church team player on more than one church team, then he/she may play with either team but not both.

2. For industrial adult divisions, participants must be a bona fide employee of one company or government located in the State of Georgia. Players may have competed as a team under one GRPA agency. Players must have competed in the agency's local softball, basketball, or volleyball program and meet all other GRPA requirements to participate in industrial play.
 - a. To qualify as a bona fide employee, a person must work the minimum number of hours per week, which is no less than 30 hours worked in the industry by the average full-time employee.
 - b. A player who has established seniority at his job and is temporarily laid off may continue to represent his team in the industrial division or until he or she takes or receives another full-time job.

- c. Official GRPA Rosters for industrial teams must be approved by the signature of the sponsoring industry's personnel director. The signature of the agency director or superintendent shall appear next to the signature of the personnel director.
- 3. Open Division – All players must be an integral part of the local agency's program and must live or work/attend school full time in the State of Georgia.
 - a. Players may participate on more than one GRPA team in separate divisions of the same sport provided they meet qualifications of each division. Equalizer, unlimited, and no home are subdivisions of one division. A player may not play in more than one subdivision.

ARTICLE III – OFFICIAL ROSTERS AND ACCEPTABLE BIRTH RECORDS

SECTION A – OFFICIAL ROSTERS

(A copy of the [roster](#) can be found on www.grpa.org)

NOTE: Picture IDs for adult players are required and shall be checked at each level of tournament play. Copies of picture IDs shall be accepted. The ID or copies shall be available at all times during competition. IDs must be government issued and may be listed under acceptable birth certificates in this manual, as long as they have a current picture on the ID. No player will be eligible to participate in district and/or state tournaments until a picture ID or copy is presented to the host. **All rosters regardless of sport must be typed and in alphabetical order or agency will be fined \$40 (forty dollars).** Birth records should be in the same order. Individual sports submitting rosters must have each age group on a separate roster in Alphabetical Order with Birth Records in the same order.

1. Official Rosters from GRPA are made available to agencies by each District Athletic chairman(member of State Athletic Committee) and/or the District Commissioners. They are also available on the GRPA website. These rosters shall be completed in accordance the information requested on the Official Roster, shall be certified by the agency director and other special persons required, and shall be presented with acceptable birth records (and team fees, if any) to the Tournament Director, or any State Athletic Committee Member, or the District Commissioner at a tournament for verification. This shall occur prior to the first activity of that agency in GRPA competition. Teams hosting state events should have their rosters verified prior to district level competition. Such Official Rosters are mandatory for all teams participating in GRPA athletic functions. All players must be verified before competing in his/her first game. Youth participants can only be submitted on one GRPA Roster per sport/event.
 - a. In the absence of an agency director, the next highest-ranking recreation staff person may certify his or her agency's team's Official GRPA Roster, and in doing so, assumes the same responsibility as the agency director in certifying that the players whose names appear on the Official Roster meet all GRPA eligibility requirements and that there is no fraudulent attempt to play persons who are otherwise ineligible. Regardless of the staff person who certifies the Official Roster, The Agency Director shall remain fully responsible for the eligibility of the players on his agency's team.
 - b. Additional signatures certifying the Official Roster are required in the following divisions:
 - i. The minister of a church whose league team is to represent an agency in Adult Basketball and Softball in State Church Divisions.
 - ii. The personnel Director of a company or government whose league team or company all- star team is representing an agency in the Adult Basketball and Softball Industrial Divisions.
 - c. It is mandatory that the signature of a third person who is a GRPA professional member from another agency be affixed to the Official Roster when the agency director and the person

verifying the roster (tournament director, state athletic committee, or the district commissioner) are from the same agency.

- d. All adult and youth team players must be present at team/roster/birth certificate check in prior to the first game of the tournament of ALL GRPA play. The tournament director will visually cross check each player with the names on the roster. If a player is not present at team check in, that player must check in with the tournament director prior to playing in the tournament.
 - e. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
 - f. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
2. The Tournament Director, State Athletic Committee member, or District Commissioner shall personally examine each team’s Official Roster and acceptable birth records of every player to be approved. He/she shall verify the Official Roster by affixing his/ her signature and date.
 - a. The verified or approved Official Roster shall be acceptable and official throughout all levels of GRPA competition, and acceptable birth records must remain with the team throughout district, regional, and state events. Check-in of rosters and acceptable birth records must take place at all levels of GRPA events for all sports. For team sports rosters and birth certificates must be present at check-in and individual sports submitted to host for pre-check. See roster form at end of manual. **NOTE: Any agency hosting a GRPA sanctioned event or tournament who fails to properly check the eligibility of all participants will not be allowed to bid on any GRPA sanctioned event for a minimum of one year. The agency may be subject to disciplinary action by the State Athletic Committee for failing to do their due diligence.**
 - i. In all team sports, teams are allowed to add up to 3 players to their roster when advancing to a state tournament. This can only be done if there is enough room on the original roster to add the names. Any additions must be made and submitted to the state host prior to their team’s first game of the state tournament. See pickup player form at the end of the manual.
 - b. At the request of GRPA Tournament Director at any level of competition, at the request of a State Athletic Committee Member at any level of competition, or at the request of a participating agency’s District Commissioner at the district level of competition, the staff member accompanying the agency’s team shall make available, prior to the game time or during the game, his own agency’s copy of the team’s Official Roster, provided one of the other three duplicate copies or original is not available at the playoff or tournament.
 3. There are four (4) copies of the Official Roster and the copies are to be distributed by the person who verifies the Roster and affixes his or her name by the District Tournament Director as follows: (Note: all copies mailed within 48 hours.)
 - a. WHITE ORIGINAL mailed to State Athletic Committee Chair with a district tournament report form within forty-eight hours.
 - b. YELLOW COPY – (second page) mail advancing teams only to the State Host. The District Tournament Director is to designate the District Representative(s) on this copy as champion or runner-up.
 - c. PINK COPY – (third page) mailed to District Athletic Chair with a district tournament

report form within forty-eight hours.

- d. ORANGE COPY – (fourth page) is team copy.

SECTION B – ACCEPTABLE BIRTH RECORDS

1. Birth certificate, certified abstracts of birth, certified or notarized hospital birth records, notification of birth, State ID (Youth and Adult), notification of registration, certificate of registration and regulatory military identification cards, government ID from US Department of Immigration and Naturalization, Passports, Adoption records, notarized Correctional Institution records, or clearly processed and readable copies of such shall be considered and referred to as acceptable birth records for GRPA competition. Also, Georgia Department of Public Safety Personal/DDS ID Cards issued for check cashing, etc., are acceptable if date of birth is affixed. State Athletic Chair will have the final discretion of final birth records.
 - a. Driver's License and Learner's Permit from any state shall be acceptable birth records for participants.
 - b. If a name change is involved which is different from the Acceptable Birth Records, a copy of the court order granting the name change must be also presented. An official written statement notarized by a notary public and approved by signature from a parent or guardian may be substituted if a copy of the court order cannot be obtained. Such a court order copy or an official notarized statement shall not be considered as acceptable birth records, but only as evidence that the acceptable birth record presented is the true and accurate birth certificate, certified abstract of birth, hospital record, military identification or copy of such, etc.
 - c. Any other questionable documents can be approved by the State Athletic Chair
2. The Tournament Director, State Athletic Committee Member, or District Commissioner shall personally examine each team's Official Roster and acceptable birth records of every player to be approved. Adult players shall furnish identification according to the rule. Adult rosters must be signed by the Tournament Director, State Athletic Committee Member or District Commissioner.
3. Failure of a protested individual to produce proper identification prior to his/her team or the protesting team's next scheduled game shall result in forfeiture of the game in question. Note: If a game is in progress the game shall be continued without stoppage except to protest. Fee will be returned if protest is upheld.
 - a. After the Official Roster is verified by the signature, it cannot be changed under any circumstances, and no additional names may be added except in the case of the player pickup rule in adult softball.
 - b. The fourth copy of the Official Roster (orange) shall be returned to the person in charge whose name appears on the roster, or to his assigned representative, along with all acceptable birth records. This shall be done immediately after verification. Only the agency team's copy of the Official Roster (orange) shall be necessary for GRPA competition at all levels following the initial verification. Acceptable birth records are required for ALL levels of GRPA play only at the initial verification of the Official Roster in youth competition. All adult and youth team players must be present during roster check-in prior to the first game of the tournament. Birth verification and picture IDs may be requested at any time during the competition if requested through proper procedures.
4. All procedures involving GRPA Official Rosters and Acceptable Birth Records shall be completed prior to an agency team's first appearance in GRPA competition. Any special requests to verify rosters at a later time shall not be granted by the Tournament Director, State Athletic Committee Member, or

District Commissioner. Any team qualified to go straight to the State Tournament must have their roster signed by the Agency Director and verified by a District Athletic Representative prior to the first game of the State Tournament.

- a. To verify Official Rosters and to examine the acceptable birth records with State Athletic Committee Members and the District Commissioner. All adult and youth team players must be present at team/roster check in prior to the team's first game of the tournament. The tournament director will visually cross check each player with the names on the roster. If a player is not present at team check in, that player must check in with the tournament director prior to playing in the tournament.

ARTICLE IV – GRPA TOURNAMENT AND PLAYOFFS

SECTION A – STATE HOST TOURNAMENT FEES

1. Any agency hosting a GRPA State Tournament will pay the GRPA office a fee for the right to host a GRPA State Tournament. The state host will then collect and keep all state entry fees to help offset their expense except the portion that goes to the GRPA office. The QuickScores Fees will be paid to GRPA for District and State. The host will pay all expenses including awards, game balls, officials, lights, scorers, etc.

*** Fees are to be paid to the GRPA office within 30 days after the State Tournament.**

SECTION B – TEAM COMMITMENT

1. Districts entering GRPA state level of competition and who do not fill their commitment to send a team or teams to the State Tournament will be responsible for forfeits, fines and trophies if the withdrawal causes the cancellation of the tournament/event.
2. If a team qualifies at district level for State and does not fill their commitment in State then that District may drop down in numerical finish to secure a team. They may only draw from teams in the District Tournament.
3. All teams in GRPA competition must be accompanied to tournaments or playoffs by at least one adult recreation staff person (preferably a full-time, salaried professional who is a GRPA member), or a responsible adult personally appointed by the agency director. When the staff person is not in attendance, the designated person is to attend the game in which his agency's team is participating and will make himself/herself available to the Tournament Director as the responsible person-in-charge of his or her agency's team and is the only person who can formally protest a game or an ineligible player. Once a protest has been filed and paid the agency director/staff person **MUST** be involved.
4. The defending adult sports champion teams (agency) in all sports are committed to participate in the next GRPA State Tournament unless their district withdraws them at the team-entry meeting for their particular sport. The particular team that is the defending champion does not have to play, but the agency may send another team to represent them. **Defending youth sports champion teams do not defend their titles.**
5. If the particular team that is the adult defending champion does not play locally or does not go to State, then the agency may send another team. In an adult sport's state tournament the defending champions must play as the defending champion and cannot play as a district representative.
6. District tournaments must play by GRPA Athletic Manual rules if teams are advancing to state level tournaments or competition.
7. An agency team that plays in district and qualifies for the state tournament must play as state host if that agency is hosting state unless that agency has another team to host that did not play in the district tournament. Adult sports defending champion, or their agency, must play as defending champions.

8. For all GRPA competitions at the district or state level, any negative cheering/hollering may result in a warning and/or removal from the site, whether it is for or against your team. Use of artificial noisemakers in the dugouts, bleachers, seats, and standing areas around the perimeter of the competition in all youth sports IS NOT ALLOWED. The Tournament Director is empowered with the authority to make the final decision.

SECTION C – TOURNAMENT ORGANIZATION

1. GRPA competition is conducted at two levels as established by the rules in this Athletic Manual. The two levels are referred to as District and State.
 - a. The State level consists of one district representative and the State Tournament Host, except adult team sports, which shall include host and returning champion. Adult Basketball/Softball: Teams that participate in their district tournament are eligible to participate in the State tournament. All eligible teams wishing to participate in the state tournament must contact the state host 10 working days prior to the state tournament. The host team and returning champion are also entered in the state tournament.
 - b. If a tournament bracket is not filled then the district of the host team will have first choice to add another team. Then the other districts will be given the opportunity to enter another team.
2. Each district may determine its own method of obtaining a district representative to state levels of competition. If an agency enters a team (only team from agency/ no all-star selection completed in age division) that will advance straight to state the agency must provide proof of participant registration through the agency entering the team. This documentation is due at district entry meeting/deadline and signed off by a district athletic representative. The following are recommended for district levels.
 - a. Tournaments with double-elimination methods for softball and baseball.
 - b. A playoff or tournaments with single-elimination methods for basketball and football. In all single-elimination tournaments, there will be no third place award.
 - c. The best 2 of 3 matches in volleyball.
 - d. Meets on a district-wide basis for track and field, swimming and diving, tennis, and golf.
 - e. Sub-District tournaments may be used.
3. State-level tournaments and playoffs are to be set up in brackets by the State Athletic Bracket Committee with not more than eight teams in youth except for baseball (16), softball (16), and in individual sports events such as track and field, tennis, and swimming and diving, and golf. When all districts are not represented in a State Tournament, the State Athletic Committee Bracket Committee shall arrange the bracket pairings as nearly as possible to the aforementioned guideline, and in accordance with his own judgment. In youth sports, when classifications are combined, the number of teams can exceed eight for fall/winter and sixteen for summer sports.
4. For a state tournament to make in team sports, **a minimum of four** teams must be entered to proceed. However, state tournaments from different classifications may be combined if there are not enough teams to make individual tournaments.
5. Length of youth state tournament:

Sport	Number of Teams	Length of Time
Softball	8 or less	3 days
Baseball – Pitching Machine		
Baseball – Coach Pitch		

Softball Baseball – Pitching Machine Baseball – Coach Pitch	9 or more	4 days
Baseball – Live Pitch	8 or less	4 days
Baseball – Live Pitch	9 or more	5 days

ONLY the first round can be played on the first night.

6. No game shall start before 7:00 PM Monday – Friday during any Adult State Tournament. See specific sports for starting times and restrictions.
 - a. In Youth State Tournaments, no games can start before 5:00 p.m., except for summer sports which shall not begin before 2:00 p.m. on the first day of tournament. **ONLY** the first round can be played on the first night. For District level tournaments, the first games shall not begin prior to 10:00 a.m. No new game shall begin after 10:00 PM on weekdays during the school year. All games will be scheduled to start no later than 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday nights but may be played in emergency situations (rain, game delays, etc.). **No youth activities can be originally scheduled on Sunday (exception tackle football).**
 - b. Football – GRPA State Play limits the number of football games per team to two games per day with a minimum of a 3 hour rest period between games. If extenuating circumstances exist, the state chair or designee must be notified.
 - c. Soccer and Basketball – No youth teams shall be required to play more than three games in a day. A mandatory rest time is required between games – it shall be 3 hours in a single elimination tournament – if teams vote to start early, the game cannot start in less than 2 hours without special circumstances. (i.e. weather, travel times, approaching storms).
 - d. Slow and Fast Pitch Softball - No team may play more than 3 games in a day except under extenuating circumstances. (weather, power failure, etc.)
 - e. Baseball – No more than two games per day for a team will be allowed in live pitching tournaments, except for rain delays or extenuating circumstances. **No more than three games per day shall be permitted in pitching machine baseball (except for rain-delayed tournaments).**
7. Adult: If brackets are full, the Host Team must play a District Champion and Defending Champion must play a District non-champion. Adult team tournaments have been expanded to allow any team which participated in a district tournament to enter the state tournament. Team entries must be entered by their agency or district representative by the date established by the tournament host to participate (no less than 10 working days). Teams advancing to state whose district tournament did not make must comply with the roster submittal deadlines. Also included in the bracket will be the State Host and the agency from which last year's defending champion was located. The Defending Champion's agency shall defend the title.
8. Every GRPA level of competition shall be conducted by a Tournament Director appointed by the Host Agency Director Committee member of the District Commissioner. The Tournament Director of a sub-district, district or state tournament must be a full-time recreation department employee and member of GRPA. The Tournament Director will not participate in the tournament in any capacity, except as director of the tournament. The duties of the tournament director are as follows:
 - a. To assure that necessary arrangements for the tournaments are made to include notification of pairings, game times, awards, facilities inspection, reservations, security and crowd control, advance publicity, equipment made available, and any other preparations deemed appropriate for GRPA athletic functions. Pairings are to be arranged by the District for District competition, and by the

State Athletic Committee for State competition.

- b. To verify Official Rosters and to examine the acceptable birth records with State Athletic Committee Members and the District Commissioner. All adult and youth team players must be present at team/roster check in prior to the team's first game of the tournament. The tournament director will visually cross check each player with the names on the roster. If a player is not present at team check in, that player must check in with the tournament director prior to playing.
 - c. To collect team athletic fees related to the tournament.
 - d. To conduct the tournament or playoff in a professional manner benefiting GRPA.
 - e. To release appropriate local, regional and statewide publicity.
 - f. To declare a district representative for state or a state champion in accordance with the tournament or playoff level.
 - g. To forward copies of Official Rosters, team fees and results to appropriate persons specified in Article III of this rule.
 - h. To evaluate the tournament or playoff and make the recommendation in writing for improvement to members of the State Athletic Committee.
9. Every GRPA level of competition shall provide some method of protest or appeals procedure to be approved by the district for district competition, and by any member of the State Athletic Committee for state levels.
- a. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any protests or appeals and shall serve as the odd-numbered member of any tournament protest committee, which must be made up of a minimum of three people and should be listed in tournament information. Only a Protest Committee will be used for misinterpretation of the game rules. All other complaints or protest (to include but not limited to ineligible players, illegal players, ineligible pitchers, etc.) will be ruled on by the tournament director with any appeals going to the next level authority.
 - b. Any protest or appeal at the state level of competition shall be subject to review by the State Athletic Committee, and its chairman shall be notified of any such proceedings.
 - c. At his/her discretion, the State Athletic Committee Chair may establish a State Protest Committee for tournaments and may appoint the members to serve on such a special Protest Committee which shall be comprised of the State Athletic Executive Committee, District Representatives and Past-Chairs still seated. The Host Agency shall be responsible for travel and accommodation expenses incurred by assigned members of such a Protest Committee, and reimbursements must be within ninety days after a statement and proof of expenditures or receipts are rendered by the person incurring the expenses.
 - d. The State Athletic Committee shall serve as the final authority on all protests or appeals, and its decisions shall be binding to all parties concerned without further appeal.

SECTION D – TOURNAMENT PLANNING AND HOST RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Host agency to which the State Tournament, Playoff or Meet is awarded shall send all pre-planning information pertaining to the particular event to the State Athletic Committee Chair. This information must be received no later than two weeks prior to the date of opening of the Tournament, Playoff or meet.
 - a. A coaches and/or staff representative meeting must be provided prior to the tournament for the purpose of rule clarification and tournament information being distributed prior to the teams' first game. (The mandatory coaches meeting should be 1 hour prior to each team's first game).

- b. Penalty of \$25 will be assessed if a coach or staff representative does not attend this meeting. The penalty is only for youth team sports.
 - c. **NOTE: Any agency hosting a GRPA sanctioned event or tournament who fails to properly check the eligibility of all participants will not be allowed to bid on any GRPA sanctioned event for a minimum of one year. The agency may be subject to disciplinary action by the State Athletic Committee for failing to do their due diligence.**
2. In the hosting of a state level event, the following must be provided and/or accomplished:
- a. Agencies hosting a state level event must provide the following:
 - i. Adequate hotels within 30 miles.
 - ii. Rooms shall be within city or county and preferably with a national chain.
 - iii. A minimum of 50 rooms required per eight teams.
 - iv. Documentation must be provided to verify room space availability.
 - b. Sufficient number of fast-food service and restaurants available to handle the anticipated number of teams.
 - c. Adequate medical facilities within a reasonable distance.
 - d. All State hosts MUST e-mail, and post on GRPA website all pertinent information concerning GRPA State Tournaments. E-mail copies of plans to District Athletic Chair and District Tournament Host at least two weeks prior to the opening day of the tournament. These should contain:
 - i. List of motels, restaurants, and medical facilities
 - ii. Map of facilities and access routes
 - iii. Tournament brackets showing dates, pairings, times
 - iv. Must provide a list of the Protest Committee
 - e. A designated person is recommended to welcome each team upon its arrival for the purpose of:
 - i. Seeing that the teams are settled in their respective accommodations satisfactorily
 - ii. Being a goodwill ambassador for GRPA, the local community, and the host agency throughout the entire tournament.
 - f. Adequate parking at the tournament site.
 - g. Visible and operational scoreboards and emergency backup equipment in case of failure.
 - h. Officials per requirements of manual.
 - i. Suitable drinking fountains, restroom facilities, concessions, seating for players and spectators.
 - j. A public address system with an acceptable adult announcer for the duration of an event.
 - k. Adequate maintained facilities, which meet minimum requirements as stated in GRPA Athletic Manual. (Fields should be brought up-to-standard preceding each game where a tournament consists of multi-games).
 - l. Sufficient number of adult staff who are competent and familiar with GRPA procedure.
 - m. The Host Department should send news releases to the media in the area at least two weeks prior to the staging of the event to insure attendance.
 - n. A written follow-up action report shall be mailed to the State Athletic Committee Chair

to contain:

- i. Complete copy of brackets and results including scores
- ii. Recommendation in changes or action
- iii. Problems in detail and recommendation for the corrective measures to be taken.
- o. Agencies hosting a state softball/baseball tournament must provide fields with adequate lighting for night play.

ARTICLE V – HOSTING STATE EVENTS

SECTION A – WHO MAY HOST AND COST TO HOST

1. Any full-time agency, in good standing, may bid to serve as the State Host for a tournament/event in which that agency is represented.
2. Any agency awarded a bid will pay, to the GRPA office, a fee known as a “rights fee”. The successful bidder will be billed by the GRPA office. **(Refer to fee structure on page 26-27.)**
 - a. **All awards for GRPA state tournaments must be purchased from the official awards vendors that are approved by the State Athletic Committee and Board of Trustees.** The State Host will pay all expenses to include awards (which are sent by the State), game balls, required equipment to run an event, officials, lights, personnel, etc.
 - b. The State Host will retain all entry fees to offset its expense.

SECTION B – BIDDING TO HOST STATE EVENTS

1. Hosts for GRPA state-level events shall be determined by the State Athletic Committee at a meeting for that purpose.
 - a. Accepted procedures for submitting a bid to host a state athletic event must include the submission of a completed bid form found at the end of this manual. Generally, all agencies are notified of the submission deadline by various methods well in advance of the deadline. A representative of each bidding agency is encouraged to be in attendance at the bid meeting to present the bid on behalf of the agency. **Bids to host GRPA state athletic championships are due to the State Office by Friday of Conference week. .**
 - b. An oral bid can be presented and accepted at this meeting ONLY IF no written bid acceptable to the State Athletic Committee is received. Such bid can be taken only through a department representative or a State Athletic Committee member of that agency’s district.
 - c. The State Athletic Committee reserves the right to reject any bid.
 - d. Before any state tournament is awarded, the facility should be inspected by a member of the state athletic committee to make sure the facility meets GRPA state tournament standards.
 - e. Swimming and Track bidders may bid for up to two years.

SECTION C – RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HOST

1. The Host Agency shall provide a minimum number of competent adults for scorers, a Tournament Director (GRPA Member) and approved game officials in accordance with Rule II, Article IV.
 - a. For Track and Field, there will be a Meet Director, starter, clerk of the course, head finish judge-timer and finish judge timers (lane inspectors), head field judges (each field event), and scorers. Other assistants are also desired.
 - b. For Golf and Tennis, only a tournament director and scorer are needed. In tennis, however, players may call their own lines and scores unless either player requests a judge. In such a case,

the Tournament Director shall assign a competent adult, who may also be a competitor in another age division to judge a match. Such a judge must be from a neutral agency.

- c. For Swimming and Diving, there will be a starter, stroke and turn judges, finish judges, timers, scorers, clerk of course, awards personnel, announcer, diving judges and other deemed necessary by the host agency.
2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for proper conduct of spectators. GRPA Sportsmanship Statement must be read prior to all district and state tournament contests. For individual sports, it should be read a minimum of three times per day.

GRPA SPORTSMANSHIP STATEMENT

“The Georgia Recreation and Park Association and its member agencies have made a commitment to promote good sportsmanship by athletes, coaches, and spectators at all GRPA sanctioned events. Profanity, degrading remarks, and intimidating actions directed at officials or competitors will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal from the event site. Spectators are not allowed to enter the competition area during warm-ups or while the contest is being conducted. Thank you for your cooperation in the promotion of good sportsmanship at today’s event.”

1. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing the required balls/equipment, etc., in accordance with the rules of this manual and under the rules of a governing body or organization adopted as such by GRPA.
2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing the facilities that meet GRPA specifications for conducting the event.
3. The Host Agency shall be responsible for releasing publicity for the event.
4. The Host Agency shall be responsible for supplying scrimmage vests in events where jerseys need to be opposite colors. A coin toss shall be conducted and the winner shall have the option of whether to wear the scrimmage vests or original jerseys.
5. The mandatory coaches meeting should be one hour prior to the team's first game.
6. All Championship play tournament information: brackets, hotel information and related information will be available through the GRPA website.

RULE II – REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS

ARTICLE I – VIOLATIONS

SECTION A – FORFEITURES, PROTESTS, AND APPEALS

1. Only the State Athletic Committee Members for any level of GRPA competition, the Tournament Director for his/her own level of GRPA competition, and the District Commissioner for district competition have the authority to forfeit any GRPA events or games prior to, during, or immediately following (if won by the agency in question) the events, provided however, such forfeiture is based on sufficient evidence of a violation of the rules in this Athletic Manual or in violation of a directive issued by the State Athletic Committee or its Chair.
2. Whenever the question of guilt remains, the forfeited agency has the right to appeal such a forfeit decision if done immediately and prior to the next scheduled game for the other team involved and which advanced because of the forfeit. If the forfeiture occurred at the district level, all appeals are made to the District Commissioner, his assigned representative, or the District Athletic Chair (member of the State Athletic Committee), as determined by the respective district by-laws. If the forfeiture occurred at the state level, all appeals are to be made to the State Athletic Committee Chair, or in their absence, the Past Chair, then the Chair-Elect or the Chair's assigned representative. At any time an ineligible player is found (with proof) to have participated in GRPA competition, the team is disqualified from further play. The team is subject to action by the District, State, or both.

This can be enforced either during or after the event or between district and state tournaments. Note: In individual sports, the penalty applies to the individual participant.

Protests shall be processed in the same manner except that the burden of proof in a protest rests with the protesting agency. The protesting agency may be assisted in its investigation by the members of the State Athletic Committee, the Tournament Director, and/or the District Commissioner.

- a. If the appeal or protest is made by an agency at the district level, the District Commissioner or his assigned representative shall take the appropriate action in accordance with the district's by-laws. Disputes regarding the athletic functions within a district will be acted upon by the State Athletic Committee Chair. Decisions rendered by the State Athletic Committee shall be final and binding to all parties.
- b. If the appeal or protest is made by an agency at the state level, the State Athletic Committee Chair or in their absence, Past Chair, then the Chair Elect or the Chair's assigned representative shall take appropriate action, which at his own discretion, may include polling members of the State Athletic Committee. The agency making the appeal or protest shall reimburse the State Athletic Committee Chair for any expenses incurred for such action within ninety days after a statement is rendered.
- c. Appeals and protests are acceptable only under the aforementioned procedures and only by the recreation staff adult or responsible adult accompanying the agency team as stated in Rule 1, Article IV, Section B, paragraph 3. Players, parents, spectators, or other such non-recognized official agency representatives may not appeal decisions or protests. A protest fee of \$50 must be paid at time of protest for each rule interpretation protested and per each individual in player eligibility cases. Once a protest has been filed and paid the agency director/staff person MUST be involved.
- d. **Protests are allowed on rule misinterpretation and illegal players only.** No protest is allowed on judgment calls. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

3. Any problems in a tournament other than a game rule misinterpretation protest may be corrected by the tournament director when found or noticed.

SECTION B – FORFEITS

1. A team that forfeits its first game in a State Tournament can continue to participate in remaining games if they call in advance or have some representatives present.
2. In the event of a double forfeit in a State Tournament, a coin will be flipped between the two teams to determine a winner and loser.
3. Forfeit, withdrawal, and non-notification fees:
 - a. In the event of a forfeit or withdrawal after the bracket is drawn in a state competition, the team will be required to pay a forfeit fee of \$805.00 (entry fee \$305.00 and \$500.00 forfeit fee). This fee applies to no shows and intentional forfeits. Teams and players may be suspended from GRPA play for unsportsmanlike conduct and/or forfeits. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.
 - b. The agency that forfeits will be placed on probation from that sport for one year. The agency may appeal probation before the State Athletic Committee. (See page 26)
 - c. Districts entering the GRPA state level of competition that do not fulfill their commitment to send a team or teams to the State Tournament will be responsible for forfeits, fines, and trophies if the withdrawal causes the cancellation of the tournament/event.

4. Game time is forfeit time.

SECTION C – PROBATIONS, SUSPENSIONS, AND FINES

1. Agencies found in violation of this Athletic Manual or in violation of directives issued by the State Athletic Committee or its Chair may be placed on probation or suspension for any period of time to be determined by the State Athletic Committee, which shall give full consideration of the offense.
 - a. The State Athletic Committee may take immediate action per the manual or may request a full report from the agency prior to rendering a decision. The agency involved may request a hearing and appeal to the committee after the decision or penalty is levied. This appeal or request must be done within thirty days of the meeting and prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the State Athletic Committee. If no appeal or request to appear is requested, the action will stand as ruled and no further action may be taken later.
 - b. The State Athletic Committee vote, regarding suspensions and probations, must include a majority of the members present. The Chair is empowered to vote in the case of a tied majority vote. The committee may suspend adult teams and individuals who are “no shows” at the state level tournament and put the agency on probation the first year and after second year suspend that agency for a no show in the same sport.
 - c. Suspension shall include the barring from any or all GRPA athletic functions. With probation, it shall include a warning, reprimand, and/or conditional allowances for continued participation in any or all GRPA athletic functions.
 - d. If an illegal player participates in any program, the player and team are suspended for one year and the agency may be probated or suspended.
2. When considering suspension of individuals and agencies:

- a. The **first offense/time** an agency violates the procedures/rules as set forth in the SAC Manual for unsportsmanlike conduct imposed on the coach/ Recreation Personnel for ejection; he/she must sit out the next scheduled game/event per the sit out rule as indicated in the SAC Manual. Byes or rained out events will not be counted as sit out of a game. The agency will be placed on probation for that sport and is also responsible for any further coach behavior and fines as indicated in the manual.
- b. An incident/ejection report must be completed by the tournament director and submitted to the SAC Chair and District Athletic Personnel. **See Ejection Protest Game Incident Form, Appendix J.**
- c. When the Coach or Recreation Personnel is ejected **twice in the same event or season of play** for a violation of the sportsmanship code of conduct, he/she is immediately suspended from coaching or participating in GRPA Sanctioned Events until he/she appears for a review hearing of the incidents before the GRPA Appeals Committee, and a decision as rendered. The State Athletic Committee Chairman may revoke all Coaching/ Participation privileges until the next meeting of the SAC Appeal Committee. The Tournament/Event Director who is a member of GRPA will gather all reports from officials and witnesses to the incident and make recommendations to the State Athletic Appeals Committee.
- d. Failure to meet with or notify the GRPA SAC Appeal Committee to further review circumstances pertaining to the situation at hand will automatically place the coach on suspension for all GRPA Activities/Events.
- e. The Coach and/or Agency will have the right to appeal to the appeal Committee any decision implemented because of their behavior. When appealing a decision/ruling, to the Appeal Committee it is strongly recommended the individual/agency rep appear in person. The SAC Chair in consultation with the appeals committee chair can determine if written letter of an appeal will be accepted.
- f. Once a request is submitted to the SAC chair by the Appeal deadline the appeal will go to the Appeal Committee for review and action.
- g. GRPA SAC Appeal Committee member shall not discuss action of the GRPA SAC Appeal Committee outside of the role they represent within GRPA.
- h. Agency requests must go through the Chairperson for more information.

SECTION D – CLARIFICATIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

1. The Chair of the State Athletic Committee is empowered with the authority to make clarifications and interpretations of rules and regulations found in this Athletic Manual, provided the majority of the State Athletic Committee does not vote in disagreement with the clarification or the interpretation rendered by the Chair.
2. Violations shall include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. The use of ineligible players.
 - b. Failure to appear ready to play by the announced game time of a scheduled tournament or playoff.
 - c. Failure to continue to play when directed to do so by the Tournament Director, State Athletic Committee Member, or on district level, by the District Commissioner or District Athletic Committee.
 - d. Rules infractions.
 - e. Unsportsmanlike conduct or any conduct or appearance deemed by the State Athletic Committee as detrimental to the best interests of the Georgia Recreation and Park Association, Inc. its professionals, or its affiliate organizations.

- f. Any other activity or lack of activity deemed inappropriate or illegal by the State Athletic Committee in accordance with the Rules of this Athletic Manual.

ARTICLE II – AWARDS

SECTION A – PROCEDURES FOR BIDDING STATE AWARDS

1. All bid awards shall be decided by the sealed bid process, and advertising for such bid notices shall be through the normal channels of GRPA, Inc. to include, but not limited to, publication of notice in the Recreation and Parks in Georgia, “Recreation and Park Matters”, bulk mailings, special mailings, and any other method of notice which may be deemed feasible by the State Athletic Committee Chair and the Executive Director.
2. Requests for bid information shall be made in writing to the GRPA, Inc., administrative office, or to the State Athletic Committee Chair. Bids shall not be accepted unless these parties have written record of a bid request.
3. Bids must be received no later than seven days prior to the announced time for the meeting of the State Athletic Trophy Committee to begin at which bids will be opened. This meeting will generally be held in January. Illustrative samples of the award that the company or its bidding representative is offering for selection shall be presented on the same day of the bid opening.
4. The bid will be presented to the apparent, best bidder. (NOTE: The lowest bid does not necessarily mean that it is the best bid). All successful and unsuccessful bidders will be notified no later than ten days after the date of opening bids.
5. The State Athletic Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or to use any other method in selecting award suppliers, with the approval of the GRPA Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE III – OFFICIALS FOR GRPA COMPETITION

SECTION A – DISTRICT AND STATE LEVELS

(Additional officials may be used per national governing body guidelines)

1. The rules in this section shall apply to all district and state levels except swimming and diving, track and field, tennis and volleyball.
 - a. “Registered Official” must have a membership with a certified officials’ association acceptable by the Georgia High School Association and designated by GHSA standards as a Certified Official.
 - b. “Game Official” is defined as those who are in control of the game itself, during its length of play and those who actually officiate the game.
 - c. “Assistant Officials” are those who assist the game officials as scorers, timers (except football), judges, statisticians, starters, or other such necessary supplementary game assignees.
 - d. “Competent Adult” is defined as a person 18 years of age or older who is considered proficient for assistant officials’ positions and duties as scorers, timers, judges, statisticians, starters, or in other such necessary supplementary assignments.
 - e. Softball officials must be USA Softball or GHSA approved.
2. Game Officials shall be uniformly attired in accordance with accepted GHSA and other affiliate standards.

3. Game Officials should be given a copy of the GRPA rules pertaining to the sport they are officiating. These rules should be reviewed by the Tournament Director and discussed in pre-tournament meeting with officials.
4. Game Officials and Assistant Officials are the responsibility of the Host Agency as to their assignments for games, unless otherwise directed by the State Athletic Committee or its Chair.
5. The Tournament Director for all state levels of competition shall be a competent adult who has professional membership in the GRPA. He or she is to be assigned by the Host Agency who shall submit his name to the State Athletic Committee Chair for approval prior to the assigned state level of competition. In addition to the responsibilities of the Tournament Director, he or she shall also have the authority to forfeit any game if the Host Agency does not provide the necessary arrangements for games, unless unavoidable circumstances exist and are deemed uncontrollable by the Tournament Director.
The Host Agency shall be responsible for reimbursement of the Tournament Director's expenses for travel and accommodations; payable within ninety (90) days after a statement of expenses is rendered to the Host Agency.

ARTICLE IV – TYPE AND NUMBER OF REQUIRED OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL

SECTION A – DISTRICT COMPETITION

A minimum of two registered officials must be used for all district games, except in swimming and diving, track and field, and football. Football must use four (4) registered officials. Individual sports are decided by the districts, and all other personnel are decided by the districts.

SECTION B – STATE COMPETITION

1. Officials for state GRPA competition are required as follows:
 - a. BASKETBALL GAMES
 - i. A minimum of two REGISTERED officials who are members of a GHSA-approved and/or GISA approved association must be used in all state tournaments; exception: finals must use three officials. Official crews must rotate every 3 games, preferably every two. Host may use additional officials as approved by the national governing body.
 - ii. A minimum of two competent adults as assistant officials to serve as scorer and timer.
 - iii. Tournament Director as prescribed by this manual.
 - b. BASEBALL GAMES
 - i. A minimum of two REGISTERED GHSA Game Officials or NBC Umpires who are a member of a chartered NBC Umpires Association.
 - ii. A minimum of one competent adult as a scorer.
 - iii. Tournament Director as prescribed by this manual, and to assist the umpire-in-chief in verifying acceptable playing equipment, including the bats.
 - c. SOFTBALL GAMES
 - i. A minimum of two REGISTERED GHSA or USA Softball game officials who are a member of an approved association in GHSA or ASA USA Softball and a member of a chartered USA Softball Umpires Association. (Fast-pitch softball officials must be trained in fast-pitch softball.)
 - ii. A minimum of one competent adult as a scorer per game.

- iii. Tournament Director as prescribed by this manual and to assist the umpire-in-chief in verifying acceptable playing equipment, including the bats.
- d. FOOTBALL GAMES
 - i. A minimum of four REGISTERED Game Officials for state level competition.
 - ii. A minimum of three REGISTERED Officials for district level competition.
 - iii. Tournament or playoff director as prescribed by this manual, and to conduct official weigh- ins, approve game preparations and field conditions, and to supervise the game itself.
- e. VOLLEYBALL MATCHES
 - i. A minimum of two (2) officials per court shall be employed for state GRPA competition.
 - ii. They must be USVBA REGISTERED or working toward certification.
- f. TRACK AND FIELD MEET
 - i. The State Athletic Committee shall serve as the Games Committee (Jury of Appeals), and the Chair or his assigned representative shall serve as Referee for the State Meet.
 - ii. A minimum number of competent adults to serve as Starter, Clerk of the Course, Head Finish Judge Timer, Finish Judge Timers (lane inspectors), Head Field Judges (for each field event competition), and Scorers as approved by State Athletic Committee.
 - iii. Other Officials to serve as assistant starters, finish judges, marshals, field judges, event recorders, scorers, meet announcers, and any other personnel deemed necessary. These are recommended, although not required. Each District Commissioner is encouraged to provide a similar authority for district meets. Host must provide a minimum of 3 qualified officials by NFHS, GHSA, USTAF, or AAU to monitor all exchange zones during relays
 - iv. Meet Director as prescribed by this manual.
- g. SWIMMING MEET
 - i. Four Registered Officials to serve as the starter, stroke and turn judges, and field judges. These four officials are to be approved by the State Athletic Committee and shall have no connection with any agency team represented at the State Meet (US Swim and National Federation Swim Officials accepted).
 - ii. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing all officials necessary for the proper management of the State Meet, including diving judges, timers, scorers, clerk of course, awards personnel, announcer, and others as deemed necessary.
- h. STATE TENNIS MEET
 - i. The Host Agency shall provide a minimum number of Competent Adults in accordance with this manual. Players may call their own lines and scores, unless either competitor requests a judge. In this case, the Tournament Director shall assign a competent adult who may also be a competitor in another age division to judge the match. Such a judge shall not be a representative from either of the agencies represented.
 - ii. Tournament Director as prescribed by this manual.
- i. SOCCER – A minimum of two REGISTERED officials shall be employed for State GRPA competition. If two officials are used, they both must be at least 18 years old. If three officials

are used, the center official must be at least 18 years old but the other two may be younger (but older than the age group they are officiating).

- j. GOLF – The host shall provide a minimum number of competent adults to serve as Tournament Director and scorer.
- k. PICKLEBALL
 - i. Self-officiated.
 - ii. Host provides tournament balls. Players provide own paddles.
- l. KICKBALL – The host must provide tournament balls. Teams can use their own WAKA ball pending tournament host approval.
- m. YOUTH WRESTLING
 - i. Registered Officials (USA Wrestling, and NFHA/GHSA) to serve as the meet referee/assistant tournament director and referees.
 - ii. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing all officials necessary for the proper management of the State Meet, including meet referee, officials, mats, timers, scorers, tournament director, awards personnel, announcer, and others as deemed necessary.
- n. CROSS COUNTRY MEET -
See page 197-200.

ARTICLE V – INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

1. Adverse Weather Situations:

- a. If severe weather warnings have been issued prior to game time, we will update the weather line of game status; updates will be posted between [3:00pm or 4:00pm].
- b. If severe weather warnings indicate the adverse weather will be active during game times then game are to be cancelled for player safety. If during a state or regional event then coordinate with representatives of that group.
- c. If a Tornado Warning has been issued/is out prior to play, no play/games will be played on that date. You will need to confirm each time this occurs upon or prior to your arrival by calling the office and/or weather line.
- d. If a game is in process when a Tornado Watch has been declared, staff will continue to monitor the situation and determine if the adverse weather is imminent that could create unsafe playing conditions or lengthy delays.
- e. If unsafe conditions are determined and confirmed by full time staff: /emergency personnel on site or by calling EMS/911 play needs to be stopped immediately and move players/public to a safe area. If out of doors, move inside or to vehicles (if safe) until it is safe to further evacuate. If caught outside and not safe indoor facility move to a low lying area and wait until safe to move to a more secure site/evacuation area or Red Cross Shelter.
- f. Do not ever force someone, especially a minor, to leave an area unless they have been left unattended and no parent/guardian is present. Should this become necessary then take the child to a safe location until further assistance can be obtained or parents notified to pick up the child.
- g. If the Tornado Warning Siren goes off during play, then suspend games immediately and move

to a safe area. Do not place anyone in harm's way insisting they stay unattended in open areas or sport complexes. Seek a safe way/zone for them to come inside a safe area if possible. If out of doors move inside or to vehicles (if safe) until it is safe to further evacuate. If caught outside and no safe indoor facility/site available then move to a low lying area and wait until safe to move to a more secure site/evacuation area or Red Cross Shelter. Do not ever force someone unless a minor to go anywhere unless no parent/guardian is NOT present. Low lying areas are often safer than vehicles. It is a personal choice as to where they relocate if adult or of consenting age or parental instruction if parent is present. If parent is not present then do your best to get person/child to as safe an area as possible.

- h. If Weather Alert Radio sounds alarm then listen to message. If emergency action should be immediately taken, move staff/crowd to a safe area. If a large number of people are present, then move to safest indoor location. If no safe indoor location then move to low lying area and watch out for flood levels. If flooding begins, then move to next safest area until help available or arrives.

2. Lightning Rules:

- a. When Lightning detector go off within 3-8 or 6-8 miles or lightning is seen the activity area is to be cleared and patrons moved to safety ASAP. After the Lightning detection system or App has cleared for a minimum of 30 minutes activities can be resumed until another warning occurs or has been heard/seen.
- b. When the lightning detection system does not clear after a 30 minute delay and timely clearing of the warning system is questionable [Typically after two 30 minute delays] the staff "on duty" shall suspend/delay activity upon consultation with full time staff. If full time staff is not available then "on duty" staff should always ensure the safety of participants. This is determined by the facility manager and is dependent on the type of program involved.
- c. Typically after two 30 minute delays games may be postponed or suspended. THIS DEPENDS ON DISTANCE TRAVELED, FIELD CONDITIONS AND PATRON SAFETY. WE CAN WAIT AS LONG AS FACILITY HOLDS UP OR BREAK IN WEATHER. Most instances it is better to let them leave and check back in xyz time if more than two/three 30 minute cycles have been sat out.
Acceptable Permanent Lightning Detectors comparable to Thor Guard, Guardian, Boltek and Sky Scan or handheld Lightning Detector by Sky Scan or other nationally recognized brands for detection of Lightning at various distances..,

3. Heat Index Policy - **WeatherBug is the GRPA approved weather monitoring source.**

- a. 94 Degrees or Below – Continue with normal activities with close monitoring
- b. 95-99 Degrees – a 5-8 minute hydrate break after the 2nd inning and each 2 innings afterwards
 - i. FOOTBALL – at end of each quarter
 - ii. SOCCER – midpoint of each half
- c. 100-104 Degrees – at the mid-point of the game (after the 3rd inning) a 10 minute break will occur with all participants going to a shaded area or cool building. The two inning break will still be in effect.
 - i. FOOTBALL – midpoint of each quarter stop for a 2 minute water break
- d. 105 Degrees & Above – all activities will cease and play will not resume until the heat index drops below 105 degrees
- e. Any stoppage in play for the heat index, the game clock will stop and resume when the umpires are ready for play.

ARTICLE VI - SPORTSMANSHIP AND BEHAVIOR POLICY

The Fundamentals of Good Sportsmanship

GRPA will be emphasizing the importance of **GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP**. The one thing we need to realize is that many people have not had **GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP** explained to them. It is earnestly hoped that the following will help everyone to understand their responsibilities at an athletic contest.

1. GAIN AN UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION FOR THE RULES OF THE GAME CONTEST/EVENT.
2. EXERCISE REPRESENTATIVE BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.
3. RECOGNIZE AND APPRECIATE SKILLS PERFORMANCES OF ALL ATHLETES AND/OR COMMUNITIES REGARDLESS OF AFFILIATION.
4. EXHIBIT RESPECT FOR THE OFFICIALS.
5. OPENLY DISPLAY RESPECT FOR THE OPPONENT AT ALL TIMES.
6. DISPLAY PRIDE IN YOUR ACTIONS AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY.

To reinforce this philosophy, the following statement must be read before all contests at GRPA district and state level competitions:

GRPA SPORTSMANSHIP STATEMENT

“The Georgia Recreation and Park Association and its member agencies have made a commitment to promote good sportsmanship by athletes, coaches, and spectators at all GRPA sanctioned events. Profanity, degrading remarks, and intimidating actions directed at officials or competitors will not be tolerated, and are grounds for removal from the event site. Spectators are not allowed to enter the competition area during warm-ups or while the contest is being conducted. Thank you for your cooperation in the promotion of good sportsmanship at today’s event.”

Guidelines for Behavior

or “What Your Fellow Players Expect of YOU!”

1. Exemplify the highest moral character, behavior and leadership, adhering to strong standards of ethics and integrity.
2. Respect the integrity and personality of the individual athlete.
3. Abide by and teach the rules of the game in letter and in spirit.
4. Set a good example for coaches, players and spectators to follow. Please:
 - a. Refrain from arguments in front of players and spectators.
 - b. Make no gestures which indicate an official or opposing coach does not know what he or she is doing or talking about.
 - c. Do not throw any object in disgust.
 - d. Coaches - shake hands with the officials and the opposing coaches before and after the contest in full view of the public.
5. Display modesty in victory and graciousness in defeat in public and in meeting/talking with the media. Please confine your remarks to game statistics and to the performance of your team.
6. Be no party to the use of profanity or obscene language, or improper actions. Accept and understand the seriousness of your responsibility and the privilege of representing the department and the community.

7. Learn the rules of the game thoroughly and discuss them with parents, fans, fellow coaches, and athletes. This will assist both them and you in the achievement of a better understanding and appreciation of the game.
8. Teach good sportsmanship and reward teams/teammates who are good sports.
9. Treat opponents the way you would like to be treated, as a guest or friend. Who better than you can understand all the hard work and team effort that is required of your sport? Never direct remarks at opponents in a taunting manner.
10. Wish opponents good luck before the game and congratulate them in a sincere manner; just as you would like to be greeted following either victory or defeat.
11. Respect the integrity and judgment of game officials. The officials are doing their best to help promote you and your sport. Treat them with respect, even if you disagree with their judgment, and your reputation will only benefit. Leave a positive impression of you and your team in the eyes of the officials and all people at the event.
12. Understand the seriousness and responsibility of your role and the privilege of representing the department and the community in which you live.
13. Establish standards of desirable behavior and attempt to transfer that to your spectators.
14. Select positive comments which praise your team without antagonizing the opponents.
15. Encourage a positive crowd alternative when booing or an inappropriate behavior begins.
16. Give encouragement to injured players and recognition to outstanding performances for both teams.
17. Remember: recreational athletics are learning experiences for participants and mistakes are sometimes made. Praise athletes in their attempt to improve themselves both as young athletes and as people.
18. Spectators need to understand that a ticket/admission to an event is a privilege to observe the contest, not a license to verbally assault others and be generally obnoxious. You also are a direct reflection on your community/program.
19. Refrain from the use of any controlled substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.) before and during games and afterwards on or near the site of the event (i.e., tailgating).
20. In all you do, promote ideals and fundamentals of good sportsmanship.
21. Speak out about acts of sportsmanlike behavior and do not give undue publicity to unsportsmanlike conduct.
22. Refrain from making negative comments toward participants, coaches, or officials.
23. Report facts without demonstrating partiality to either team.

**Guidelines for Behavior of Recreation Staff & Officials
or “What Your Fellow Community Members Expect of YOU!”**

1. Accept your role in an unassuming manner. Showboating and over-officiating are not acceptable.
 - a. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - i. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys

that are identical in style and color with each other.

2. Maintain confidence and poise, controlling the contest from start to finish.
3. Know the rules of the game thoroughly and abide by the established Good Sportsmanship Code.
4. Publicly shake hands with coaches of both teams before the contest.
5. Never exhibit negative emotions or argue with participants and coaches when enforcing rules.
6. When watching a game as a spectator, give the officials the same respect you expect to receive when working a contest.
7. Develop a program for teaching and promoting the ideals and fundamentals of Good Sportsmanship within the program and the state association.
8. Provide appropriate supervisory personnel for each event.
9. Support participants, coaches, and fans that teach and display good sportsmanship.
10. Recognize exemplary behavior and actively discourage undesirable conduct by participants, coaches, and fans.
11. Serve as a positive role model and expect the same from parents, fans, participants, coaches, and other school personnel.

Guidelines for Behavior of Recreation Staff & Officials or “Acceptable Behavior Expected of YOU!”

1. Applause during introduction of players, coaches, and officials.
2. Players shaking hands with opponent who fouls out while both sets of fans recognize player's performance with applause.
3. Accept all decisions of officials.
4. Handshakes between participants and coaches at end of contest, regardless of outcome.
5. Treat competition as a game, not a war.
6. Coaches/players search out opposing participants to recognize them for outstanding performance and coaching.
7. Positive cheering by players, coaches, and spectators is encouraged.
8. Applause at end of contest for performances of all participants.
9. Everyone showing concern for an injured player, regardless of team.
10. Encourage surrounding people to display only sportsmanlike conduct.

Guidelines for Unacceptable Behavior or “Would You Want Your Mama to See You Acting Like That?”

1. For all GRPA competitions at the district or state level, **any negative cheering/hollering** may result in a warning and/or removal from the site, whether it is for or against your team. Use of **artificial noisemakers** in the dugouts, bleachers, seats, and standing areas around the perimeter of the competition in all youth sports **IS NOT ALLOWED**. The Tournament Director is empowered with the authority to make the final decision.
2. **Use of tobacco** in any form on the competition area or on the bench by participants, coaches,

or officials, regardless of local rules, **IS NOT ALLOWED.**

3. **Yelling or waving arms** during opponent's free-throw attempt, serve, at-bat, start, etc.
4. **Disrespectful or derogatory** yells, chants, songs, or gestures.
5. **Booing or heckling** an official's decision.
6. **Criticizing officials** in any way or displays of temper in response to an official's call.
7. Yells which **antagonize** opponents.
8. **Refusing** to shake hands or give recognition for good performance.
9. **Blaming loss** of game on officials, coaches, or participants.
10. **Laughing or name-calling** to distract an opponent.
11. Use of **profanity or displays of anger** that draw attention away from the game.
12. **Pulling team off** of the field/court.

Penalties for Unacceptable Behavior

Any parent or spectator acting in an unsportsmanlike manner or in any way that could prove detrimental to any player, official, coach, or another spectator will be subject to disciplinary action by their respective recreation department and the GRPA State Athletic Committee:

1. Language unbecoming to the league/event (Suspension: 1 game)
2. Touching or striking a coach or official (Suspension: indefinite)
3. Unsportsmanlike conduct at an athletic event/program (Suspension: 1 game)
4. Damage to recreation property (Suspension: indefinite)

Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

1. A forfeited (not played) game shall not be counted as a sit-out game for an ejected player.
2. Thrown out of a game/contest/event (suspension remainder of present game/contest/event, suspension next game, and must leave the park immediately)
3. See penalties for individuals/agencies unacceptable behavior sheet – page 62.

Code of Conduct

The GRPA State Athletic Committee and Board of Trustees believe that **Good Sportsmanship** is a core value, and its promotion and practice are essential. Participants, parents, officials, administrators, and spectators have a duty to assure their teams/communities promote the development of good character.

This code of conduct applies to all participants involved in athletics and GRPA-sponsored activities/events.

1. Participants will advocate, model, and promote the development of good character to include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, teamwork, fairness, caring, and citizenship while promoting emotional, physical, and moral well-being above desires and pressure to win.
2. Participants will respect peers, coaches, officials, opponents, and others associated with the event.
3. Participants will promote fair play and uphold the spirit of the rules in the activity.
4. Participants will model appropriate behavior at all times.
5. Participants will engage in a healthy lifestyle.

RULE III – ATHLETIC CLASSIFICATION

ARTICLE I – PURPOSE

In order to expand recreation athletic competition within the Georgia Recreation & Park Association, Inc., and to encourage new and smaller agencies to participate, the GRPA agency membership approved, in 1972, a system by which recreation agencies that participate in the GRPA athletic programs are classified for youth team events.

ARTICLE II – LIMITATIONS

Classification is limited to all youth team events: 8 & Under, 10 & Under, 12 & Under, 14 & Under, and 17 & Under divisions in all sports shall be classified **except as mentioned in each sport section**.

Individual and dual events such as track and field and swimming shall have two classifications. “A” will consist of all class “A” agencies and “B/C” shall consist of all others. There will be no classification for soccer, tennis, golf, or diving. Adult team sports shall not be subject to classification.

ARTICLE III – METHOD OF CLASSIFICATION

SECTION A – NUMBER OF CLASSIFICATIONS

There shall be three classifications designated as Class “A”, “B”, and “C.” Some sports may combine classes to provide opportunities for play. Some sports (soccer, basketball, etc.) may have more or less classes. Check sport sections for further information

SECTION B – DETERMINATION OF CLASSIFICATION

The classification of any agency shall be determined by the figures of youth populations from the latest United States Bureau of the Census tabulation and shall be reviewed, usually every five years, upon availability of updated figures.

SECTION C – STANDARDS FOR CLASSIFICATION

Classification shall be based on the following:

1. Class A – Agencies in counties of 15,000 youth population or more (17 and under).
2. Class B – Agencies in counties of less than 15,000 youth and more than 5,000 (17 and under).
3. Class C – Agencies in counties of 5,000 or less youth population (17 and under).
4. All state, federal, private, military, or other related organizations participating are subject to youth population criteria to meet classification guidelines for 17 and under.

ARTICLE IV – APPEALS

SECTION A – CLASSIFICATION APPEAL

1. All agencies will remain in their class per standards (listed in manual) unless appeal is made to the State Athletic Committee. Appeal is allowed by agency or district and must be submitted to Hardship at least two weeks prior to the October State Athletic Committee meeting.
2. Appeals may be made according to the following rules:
 - a. All classification appeals must go to the State Hardship Committee with District recommendation. The State Hardship Committee will present to the Athletic Committee where a 2/3 vote for approval is required.
 - b. If an agency wants to drop one class, they must be approved by a majority vote of the district and state athletic committee.

- c. Any agency wanting to move up a classification must be approved by majority vote of the district and the State Athletic Committee.
- d. Decisions made in October may be appealed at the Presidents Assembly. These appeals must be passed by a 2/3 vote of the State Athletic Committee.
- e. Agencies who wish to change classification for specific individual sports (swimming and track and field) may appeal in writing to the State Athletic Committee Chairman by September 1. The district's recommendation must also be included in the appeal. The decision will be made at the October meeting, and if denied, can be appealed at the Presidents Assembly.
- f. Agency requesting classification changes, if approved, will remain in said classification until such time that the Agency or District requests their classification status change. Any request for classification change should be submitted to the SAC Chair and to the Hardship Committee with District recommendation for consideration. In those instances, the September deadline will still apply. If no change in classification is requested, they will stay in approved classification until the district or agency requests said change.
- g. Counties with more than one functioning department may be placed in a lower classification only through the appeal process.
- h. Any agency that does not operate and maintain their youth teams/leagues cannot appeal to a lower classification.

ARTICLE V – GRPA STATE AGENCY CLASSIFICATION

First District		
<i>Class A</i>	<i>Class B</i>	<i>Class C</i>
Augusta/Richmond County	Bulloch County	Cochran-Bleckley County
Columbia County	Burke County	Eastman-Dodge County
	City of Rincon (Effingham County)	Evans County
	Dublin-Laurens County	Glascoc County
	Effingham County	Glennville (Tattnall County)
	Lyons (Toombs County)	Hawkinsville-Pulaski County
	South Toombs County	Jefferson County
	Swainsboro-Emanuel County	Jenkins County
	Thomson-McDuffie County	Johnson County
	Toombs County	Lincoln County
	Twin City – (Emanuel County)	Metter-Candler County
	Vidalia (Toombs County)	Reidsville (Tattnall County)
		Soperton (Treutlen County)
		Screven County
		Washington County
		Wheeler County

Second District		
<i>Class A</i>	<i>Class B</i>	<i>Class C</i>
Bloomington	Brunswick (Glynn County)	Alma-Bacon County
Chatham County	Camden County	Appling County
Fort Stewart (Liberty County)	City of Pooler	Brantley County
Liberty Co Track & Field Only Sport	Douglas-Coffee County	Charlton County
Savannah (Chatham County)	Garden City (Chatham Co)	Jeff Davis County
	Glynn County	Long County
	Liberty County	McIntosh County
	Okefenokee (Ware Co)	North Bryan County
	Port Wentworth (Chatham County)	Patterson (Pierce Co)
	South Bryan County	Pearson (Atkinson Co)
	Ware County	Pierce County
	Waycross YMCA	Telfair County
	Wayne County	

Third District		
<i>Class A</i>	<i>Class B</i>	<i>Class C</i>
Albany (Dougherty Co)	Bainbridge (Decatur Co)	Adel-Cook County
Albany Area YMCA	Crisp County	Berrien County
Columbus (Muscogee Co)	Grady County	Blakely-Early County
Valdosta (Lowndes Co)	Lee County	Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
Valdosta-Lowndes YMCA	Moultrie-Colquitt County	Dooly County
	Sumter County	Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County
	Thomasville YMCA	Irwin County
	Tift County	Lanier County
	Worth County	Macon County
		Miller County
		Mitchell County
		Terrell County
		Turner County
		Wilcox County

Fourth District		
<i>Class A</i>	<i>Class B</i>	<i>Class C</i>
Clayton County	Bremen (Haralson County)	Bowdon (Carroll County)
College Park (Fulton County)	Carroll County	Heard (Carroll County)
Coweta County	Carrollton (Carroll County)	Lamar County
East Point (Fulton County)	Fairburn (Fulton County)	Manchester (Meriwether County)
Fayette County	Haralson County	Meriwether County
Forest Park (Clayton County)	Harris County	Mount Zion (Carroll County)
Peachtree City (Fayette County)	Hapeville (Fulton County)	Pike County
Spalding County	Newnan	Tallapoosa (Haralson County)
South Fulton (Fulton County)	Riverdale (Clayton County)	Temple (Carroll County)
Summit YMCA (Coweta County)	Thomaston-Upson	
Troup County	Union City	
Tyrone (Fayette County)	Villa Rica (Carroll County)	

Fifth District		
<i>Class A</i>	<i>Class B</i>	<i>Class C</i>
Acworth (Cobb County)	Calhoun (Gordon County)	
Bartow County	Catoosa County	
Canton (Cherokee County)	Cedartown (Polk County)	
Cartersville (Bartow County)	City of LaFayette (Walker County)	
Cherokee County	Chickamauga (Walker County)	
City of Austell (Cobb County)	Fort Oglethorpe (Catoosa/Walker County)	
Cobb County	Gordon County	
Dalton (Whitfield County)	Murray County	
Douglasville (Douglas County)	Rockmart (Polk County)	
Douglas County	Summerville (Chattooga County)	
Euharlee (Bartow County)	Trion	
Kennesaw (Cobb County)		
Marietta (Cobb County)		
Paulding County		
Powder Springs		
Rome-Floyd County		
Smyrna (Cobb Co)		
Whitfield County		
Woodstock (Cherokee Co)		

Sixth District		
<i>Class A</i>	<i>Class B</i>	<i>Class C</i>
Bibb County	Baldwin County	Greene County
Brookhaven (DeKalb County)	Butts County	Hancock County
Covington (Newton County)	City of Tucker (DeKalb Co)	Jasper County
DeKalb County	Decatur (DeKalb County)	Morgan County
Dunwoody (DeKalb County)	Doraville (DeKalb Co)	Putnam County
GA State Parks and Historic Sites	Jones County	Twiggs County
Henry County	Monroe County	Washington-Wilkes
Rockdale County	Peach County	Wilkinson County
Stonecrest	Perry (Houston County)	
Walton County	Rehoboth Baptist Church (DeKalb County)	
Warner Robins (Houston County)		

Seventh District		
<i>Class A</i>	<i>Class B</i>	<i>Class C</i>
Alpharetta (Fulton County)	Barrow County	Banks County
Athens-Clarke County	City of Jefferson	City of Commerce
Atlanta (Fulton County)	Dawson County	Elbert County
Auburn (Barrow & Gwinnett County)	Franklin County	Fannin County
City of Lilburn (Gwinnett County)	Habersham County	Gilmer County
Cumming (Forsyth County)	Hart County	Lumpkin County
Duluth (Gwinnett County)	Jackson County	Oglethorpe County
Forsyth County	Madison County	Pickens County
Forsyth Senior Services (Forsyth Co)	Oconee County	Rabun County
Gainesville (Hall County)	Stephens County	Towns County
Gwinnett County	YMCA GA Piedmont/Bell (Hart Co)	Union County
Hall County		White County
JA Waters YMCA (Hall County)		
Johns Creek (Fulton County)		
Milton (Fulton County)		
Roswell (Fulton County)		
Sandy Springs (Fulton County)		
Snellville (Gwinnett County)		
Sugar Hill (Gwinnett County)		
Walters Family YMCA (Hall County)		
YMCA Brad Akins Branch (Barrow)		

ARTICLE VI – CENSUS SHEET**(Based on 2020 Census data)**

<u>County</u>	<u>17&U</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>17&U</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>17&U</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>17&U</u>
Appling - D2	4,504	Dade - D5	3,120	Jefferson - D1	3,644	Richmond - D1	46,899
Atkinson - D2	2,139	Dawson - D7	5,386	Jenkins - D1	1,717	Rockdale - D6	22,643
Bacon - D2	2,835	Decatur - D3	6,416	Johnson - D1	1,727	Schley - D3	1,256
Baker - D3	596	DeKalb - D-6	174,638	Jones - D6	6,434	Screven - D1	2,982
Baldwin - D6	8,102	Dodge - D1	3,825	Lamar - D4	3,978	Seminole - D3	1,683
Banks - D7	4,003	Dooly - D3	2,825	Lanier - D3	2,491	Spalding - D4	15,675
Barrow - D7	21,460	Dougherty - D3	20,758	Laurens - D1	12,144	Stephens - D7	6,026
Bartow - D5	25,918	Douglas - D5	37,470	Lee - D3	7,858	Stewart - D3	715
Ben Hill - D3	4,092	Early - D3	2,537	Liberty - D2	17,386	Sumter - D3	6,672
Berrien - D3	4,636	Echols - D3	1,042	Lincoln - D1	1,430	Talbot - D3	1,010
Bibb - D6	38,077	Effingham - D1	16,974	Long - D2	5,320	Taliaferro - D6	260
Bleckley - D1	2,952	Elbert - D7	4,261	Lowndes - D3	28,295	Tatnall - D1	4,659
Brantley - D2	4,433	Emmanuel - D1	5,646	Lumpkin - D7	5,759	Taylor - D3	1,596
Brooks - D3	3,338	Evans - D1	3,108	McDuffie - D1	5,386	Telfair - D2	2,538
Bryan - D2	11,650	Fannin - D7	4,242	McIntosh - D2	2,272	Terrell - D3	1,962
Bulloch - D1	16,057	Fayette - D4	26,317	Macon - D3	2,343	Thomas - D3	10,535
Burke - D1	6,321	Floyd - D5	22,575	Madison - D7	6,897	Tift - D3	10,039
Butts - D6	5,213	Forsyth - D7	67,595	Marion - D3	1,722	Toombs - D1	7,622
Calhoun - D3	1,045	Franklin - D7	5,106	Meriwether - D4	4,445	Towns - D7	1,586
Camden - D2	13,174	Fulton - D7	228,275	Miller - D3	1,309	Treutlen - D1	1,460
Candler - D1	2,745	Gilmer - D7	5,925	Mitchell - D3	4,897	Troup - D4	16,991
Carroll - D4	28,318	Glasscock - D1	622	Monroe - D6	5,675	Turner - D3	1,956
Catoosa - D5	15,339	Glynn - D2	18,252	Montgomery - D1	1,722	Twiggs - D6	1,540
Charlton - D2	2,450	Gordon - D5	13,753	Morgan - D6	4,521	Union - D7	3,793
Chatham - D2	60,201	Grady - D3	6,109	Murray - D5	9,793	Upson - D4	5,948
Chattahoochee - D3	2,465	Greene - D6	3,556	Muscogee - D3	48,355	Walker - D5	14,999
Chattooga - D5	5,592	Gwinnett - D7	254,578	Newton - D6	29,022	Walton - D6	23,588
Cherokee - D5	63,722	Habersham - D7	10,264	Oconee - D7	10,993	Ware - D2	8,683
Clarke - D7	22,002	Hall - D7	50,377	Oglethorpe - D7	3,068	Warren - D1	1,048
Clay - D3	547	Hancock - D6	1,327	Paulding - D5	43,683	Washington - D6	4,401
Clayton - D4	80,663	Haralson - D5	7,180	Peach - D6	8,102	Wayne - D2	7,272
Clinch - D2	1,661	Harris - D4	7,505	Pickens - D7	6,576	Webster - D3	482
Cobb - D5	178,512	Hart - D7	5,346	Pierce - D2	4,769	Wheeler - D1	1,262
Coffee - D2	10,558	Heard - D4	2,634	Pike - D4	4,342	White - D7	5,488
Colquitt - D3	11,673	Henry - D6	60,900	Polk - D5	10,884	Whitfield - D5	26,538
Columbia - D1	39,158	Houston - D6	41,726	Pulaski - D1	1,773	Wilcox - D3	1,640
Cook - D3	4,318	Irwin - D3	1,959	Putnam - D6	4,321	Wilkes - D7	2,043
Coweta - D4	35,791	Jackson - D7	19,204	Quitman - D3	430	Wilkinson - D6	2,006
Crawford - D6	2,450	Jasper - D6	3,384	Rabun - D7	2,802	Worth - D3	4,454
Crisp - D3	5,347	Jeff Davis - D2	3,945	Randolph - D3	1,376		

RULE IV (A) – YOUTH AND ADULT BASKETBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

There are six age divisions for boys and girls and four divisions for adults. The age control date is on September 1, the previous year. Participants must be 6 by the age control date. The divisions are:

<u>YOUTH</u> <i>(Boys/Co-Ed & Girls Leagues)</i>	<u>ADULT</u>	
8 & Under	Men's	Ages 18 and over
10 & Under	Women's	Ages 18 and over
10 & Under Major <i>(Class A & Class B/C combined - 10' goal)</i>	Men's	Ages 35 and over
12 & Under	Men's	Ages 40 and over
14 & Under		
17 & Under		

1. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair
2. There shall be three classifications in youth competition: A, B, C - **Exception- 10U Major will play a Class A and Class B/C combined class district and state.**
3. Youth coaches must be certified by one the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, or GHSA
4. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. Games in basketball at all levels of play are governed by the current rules and regulations of the GHSA Constitution and By-laws and the National Federation Edition of Basketball Rule Book with the exceptions as may be found in this manual.

- Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
- All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
- Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

<u>AGE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>OVERTIME</u>
8U & 10U	6 minute quarters	3 minutes
12U & Up*	8 minute quarters	4 minutes

**Including Adult*

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

- A team must have at least four players in all divisions to start a game. A team can continue with four players except in the case of an ejection.
- Basketball Free Throw: In both boys and girls ages 10U and 12U, the lane assignments are the same. In age groups 10U and up, the bottom block will be left open. 8U division free throw line will be 12 feet and the bottom block will be filled.
- Cannot start Youth Tournament before 5:00 PM on the first day of the tournament.
- During the school year, youth cannot start a new game after 10:00 PM on Monday through Thursdays. All games will be scheduled and start no later than 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday nights but may be played in emergency situations (rain, game delays, etc.)
- Cannot start Adult Tournament before 7:00 PM on Monday through Friday.
- Mercy Rule** - Beginning in the third quarter, if requested by the losing team’s coach, or any time in the fourth quarter a team gains a 20-point lead the clock will run continuously for the balance of the game except during timeouts and injuries. If not elected in the third quarter it automatically occurs in the fourth quarter when a 20-point lead occurs. If the losing team gets within ten points, the clock will return to regulation.
- No youth teams shall be required to play more than three games in a day. A mandatory rest time is required between games –it shall be 3 hours in a single elimination tournament - if teams vote to start early, the game cannot start in less than 2 hours without special circumstances. (i.e. weather, travel times, approaching storms)
- No more than 3 coaches or non-players are allowed on team bench.
- GHSA Foul Shot Rules will apply in all Basketball Age Divisions. After 5 team fouls, 2 shots will be taken. Fouls reset each quarter except overtime. This rule eliminates 1-1 free throws.
- 5 second closely guarded rule (dribble or holding ball) will be enforced.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

- Shoes shall be smooth and soft-soled for athletic use.
- The approved basketballs for all divisions are as follows:

- a. For the youth 8U, 10U, and all female divisions, the basketball must be the adopted GHSA ladies ball (285 or 28.5) size and weight. For all other divisions, a regulation sized (295 or 29.5) basketball that meets the current standards of the GHSA shall be used. It may be synthetic or leather. The ball should be at least a 5-ply nylon-wound carcass or better. The ball will be furnished by the Tournament Host and the same ball will be used throughout the tournament. Teams are responsible for their own warm-up balls.
3. Mandatory uniforms shall be matching jerseys with factory type legal numbers only on front and back described in the Georgia High School Association Rule Book. Legal numbers consist of 0, 00 (0 and 00 cannot be used on same team) 1-5, 10-15, 20-25, 30-35, 40-45 and 50-55. It is legal for players to wear matching color or white t-shirts only under game jerseys.
4. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. Penalty – Admin Tech per jersey upon entry into the game.
 - i. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. (**EFFECTIVE January 2025**)
- b. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - i. Managers, coaches, or team scorers must be attired in staff shirts that are identical in style and color with each other.
- c. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments.
5. Penalty – Illegal Equipment
 - a. Emblem/Logo/Picture Placement: GRPA waives the GHSA and NFHSA penalties for logos and clipart placement on basketball uniforms. No technical foul will be administered.
6. The Host Agency shall be responsible for supplying scrimmage vests in events where jerseys need to be opposite colors. A coin toss shall be conducted and the winner shall have the option of whether to wear the scrimmage vests or original jerseys.

SECTION B – PLAYING COURT REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIAL 8U AND 10U RULES

Court specifications and height of goals shall be in accordance with the Georgia High School Association standards found in the National Federation Basketball Rule Book, except 8U and 10U Divisions which is as follows.

1. Height of goals – 8 ½ feet (Exception – 10 & under Major A/B/C will play on 10' goals)
2. Length of quarters – 6 minutes
3. Free throw line:
 - a. 12 feet – 8U
 - b. 15 feet – 10U
4. Size of lane – 12 feet wide
5. Size of ball leather or synthetic – 28.5 in. or 285
6. 3 pt. Shot – same as other youth division rules.

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS***SECTION A – DISTRICT***

1. District level competition in basketball is to be completed as follows.
 - a. All youth divisions (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U and 17U) by the Saturday before the State tournament. All adult divisions by the Saturday before their State Tournament. Pool play is optional.

SECTION B – STATE

1. State level competition will be pool play. Any forfeit done during pool play will result in a \$750.00 fine payable to state host. For other forfeit information please see page 24.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS***SECTION A – GAME OFFICIALS***

1. A minimum of two officials who are members of a GHSA-approved and/or GISA approved association must be used in all district tournaments; exception: finals must use three officials. Official crews must rotate every 3 games, preferably every two. Host may use additional officials as approved by the national governing body.
2. A minimum of two officials who are members of a GHSA-approved and/or GISA approved association must be used in all state tournaments; exception: finals must use three officials. Official crews must rotate every 3 games, preferably every two. Host may use additional officials as approved by the national governing body.
3. No official who has played during the season in the host's local league may officiate in the District or State tournament.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE IV (B) – YOUTH AND ADULT WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. The age control date is on September 1, previous year. Participants must be 6 by age control date. A youth player will be defined as a player 16 years or younger.
2. There are two divisions:
 - a. Youth 16 & Under
 - b. Adult 17 & Over

SECTION B - ELIGIBILITY

1. To be eligible for play a GRPA Wheelchair basketball game, a player shall have:
 - a. A permanent physical disability which consistently reduces the function of the lower limbs to a degree where they cannot run, pivot or jump at the speed and with the control safety, stability and endurance required to play running basketball as an able-bodied player.
 - b. A disability that must be of a nature that it can be objectively verified by acknowledged medical and/or paramedical investigations such as measurement, X-ray, CT, MRI, etc.
 - c. Including, but not limited to hip or knee joint replacements, and have provided confirmation of the relevant surgery from their attending physician or surgeon, and supporting X-rays/scans.
 - d. In the instance of amputation, at minimum total removal of the first ray of one foot;
 - e. In the instance of a leg length discrepancy, a minimum of a 6 cm difference in leg length as measured from the greater trochanter to the ground, as is verified by standing X-ray.
 - f. Findings such as soft tissue contracture, edema or disuse atrophy, or symptoms such as pain or numbness without other objective findings shall not be considered a permanent lower extremity disability. Degrees of pain and/or numbness are not considered measurable and permanent disabilities within the meaning.
 - g. An otherwise able-bodied player with a temporary disability is not considered eligible.
2. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair
3. There shall be three classifications in youth competition: A, B, C.

4. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. Games in basketball at all levels of play are governed by the current rules and regulations of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association and American Association of Adapted Sports Official Rule Books with the exceptions as may be found in this manual.
2. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

1. For a successful three-point field goal, the large wheels of the chair in contact with the floor must be behind the three-point line when the player releases his/her try for a three-point goal; however, the front casters may be over the line. There is no relation to the plane regarding the position of the shooter.
2. The playing time for youth games are as follows:
 - a. Each game will consist of six, eight-minute periods, three in the first half and three in the second half with a 10-minute half-time break and two minutes in between each period.
 - b. The clock will stop for time outs, injuries, official time outs, and for free throws.
 - c. Possession: After the jump ball to start the game, all possessions alternate after subsequent jump ball situations until the end of regulation. If necessary, a jump ball will start the overtime period. There will be no shot clock.
 - d. Overtime:
 - i. If regulation play ends in a tie, one five-minute overtime period will be played. If the score remains tied after this overtime period is played, a five minute sudden death overtime period will be played. If neither teams scores in this sudden death overtime period, the game will be resolved through free throws. Each team will select one player to shoot their free throws. These two players will shoot free throws from wherever they have been shooting free throws during the game. The second shooter will always get the opportunity to tie if the first shooter scores. Once one player scores and the other misses, the game is over. If, after five attempts by each player no one has scored, both players will be allowed to move closer (by half the distance) to the basketball goal. If neither player makes a shot from this distance after five attempts each, they may move up to the lay-up distance. The players will shoot from this distance until one scores to end the game.
 - ii. The designated sudden death free thrower cannot have fouled out of either the regulation or overtime game(s).
 - iii. Whichever team has possession as indicated by the alternating possession arrow will be given the option to shoot first or to defer to shoot second.
 - e. Time Outs: Each team is allowed four time-outs per game for 60 seconds each. There will be only one time-out allotted for each overtime period. There will be no time outs allotted in sudden death.

3. The playing time for adult coed games are as follows:
 - a. The game shall consist of four- ten minute quarters.
 - b. The halftime intermission shall be ten minutes.
 - c. Overtime periods shall be five minutes in length.
 - d. The intermission between quarters shall be one minute.
 - e. Time outs: All teams will receive two- 30 second time outs and three 75 second time outs. Four time outs will carry over to the second half. In an extra period, each team will receive one additional 30 second time out in addition to any unused time outs from the regulation period.
 - f. Permit a head coach to request and be granted a time out when a player of that team has control of the ball in the last two minutes of the game and the last two minutes of each overtime period

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

1. To execute a dribble, a player may:
 - a. Wheel the chair by two pushes on the wheels (one hand or two hands in either direction) of the chair followed by one or more dribbles of the ball to the floor, after which he/she may start pushing again.
 - b. The player may not push more than twice, in succession, with one hand or two hands in either direction. Taking more than two pushes in succession constitutes a traveling violation and the ball is awarded to the opposing team out of bounds.
2. The large wheels of the chair must be behind and not over the free throw line. The point of contact for the large wheels of the chair with the floor must be behind the free throw line, however, the front casters may be on or over the line. The large wheels of the chair must be behind the three-point line. The front casters of the chair may be on or over the line.
 - a. The location of a player is determined by where any part of the chair is touching the floor as far as being in bounds or out of bounds or being in the front court or back court.
3. Pivot- It is legal to pivot as in regular basketball. A pivot takes place when a player, who is holding the ball, turns the chair in a given place without specific direction. This may be done:
 - a. By a player who is in motion breaking one of the wheels without forward or backward direction to the wheels. This is not a push and therefore could occur after the player with the ball has pushed two times.
 - b. By a player who has not yet utilized two pushes, pushing with both hands simultaneously in opposite directions, constituting one of the two pushes to which he/she is entitled before passing, shooting, or dribbling.
 - c. By a player with the ball pushing twice with one hand or two hands, constituting both pushes to which he/she is entitled before passing, dribbling, or shooting the ball.
 - d. A pivot can occur with or without deliberate action by the player on the wheels (pushes). When the player with the ball does exercise deliberate action on the wheels (pushes) in pivoting, these are counted against the two pushes to which he/she is entitled and limited without passing, dribbling, or shooting the ball.

4. Live/Dead Ball – For any jump ball, each jumper shall be firmly seated in the chair and shall have all wheels on or inside that half of the restraining circle that is farther from his/her own basket. An official shall toss the ball upwards between the jumpers in a plane at right angles to the sidelines, to a height greater than either of them can reach and so that it will drop between them. One or both jumpers may tap the ball after it reaches its highest point. If it touches the floor or lands on either jumper without being tapped by at least one of the jumpers, the official shall toss the ball again. Any ball that becomes lodged or located under a wheelchair, play shall be immediately stopped, and a jump ball shall be awarded according to the alternating possession arrow.
5. Out-of-Bounds and Throw-Ins
 - a. A player is out of bounds when any part of his/her body or wheelchair touches the floor or any object on or outside of a boundary.
 - b. Throw in. This rule is intended to eliminate dead ball fouls in the free throw lane prior to a throw in. Before placing the ball at the disposal of the thrower in (in his/her front court), officials should ensure that no teammates of the inbounding team is located within the free throw lane. The ball is “placed at the disposal of the thrower in” when the official starts the act of offering the ball to the thrower in (or when the official places the ball on the floor if no player of the team is entitled to the throw in is present). Thus, it is not necessary for the thrower in to touch the ball for a lane violation to be assessed.
6. Violations
 - a. No player of the team with a throw-in in the front court shall enter the free throw lane until the throw in starts. Before placing the ball at the disposal of the in-bounder, officials should check the lane for offensive players. If an offensive player is in the lane, ask the player to leave the lane area, prior to giving the ball to the in-bounder.
 - b. A player shall not remain in an opponent’s three-second lane for more than three consecutive seconds while the ball is in control of that player’s team in the front court and the game clock is running. Allowances shall be made for a player who:
 - i. Attempts to leave the three-second lane.
 - ii. Is in the three-second lane when he/she or a teammate is in the act of shooting and the ball is leaving or has just left a player’s hand on the shot for a goal.
 - iii. Dribbles in the three-second lane to shoot for a goal after having been there for less than three seconds. However, a player who passes the ball instead of trying for the goal and is in the lane longer than three seconds shall be called for a three-second violation.
 - iv. Interlocks the wheelchair with an opponent.
 - v. Once the offensive player is moving to leave the lane, they are not allowed to engage in any form of participation in the offensive play.
 - vi. A player establishes his/her self-outside the three-second lane by placing all wheels of his/her wheelchair and any anti-tip casters, which continuously come into contact with the floor outside of the three-second lane.
7. Note: The three-second rule does not apply when the ball is dead or in flight on a try because the team is not in control but does apply during an interrupted dribble.
8. Tilting chair. A team loses possession when a player leans in the chair to the extent that the chair tilts and any part of the chair other than the wheels touches the floor while gaining, maintaining, shooting, or retrieving the ball. The ball is then awarded to the opponent at the out-of-bounds spot nearest the violation and a tipping violation shall be called.

- a. Players falling out of the chair. A player may not leave or fall out of the chair to gain or maintain possession of the ball or gain any other advantage.
- b. If a player unintentionally falls out of their chair and is in direct line of play, the official shall immediately call time. The ball is awarded out-of-bounds to the team in possession at the nearest point of infraction. If no possession is maintained when a play is stopped, the officials will award the ball to the team according to the alternating possession arrow.
- c. If a player unintentionally falls out of their chair and is not in direct line of play, while a potential scoring play is in progress, time will be called (only if the fallen player is injured).
- d. A team loses possession if, in the judgement of the officials, a player falls out of his/her wheelchair to gain or maintain possession of the ball. If a player deliberately falls or crawls into the line of the play, it is a Class A technical foul.
- e. If a player intentionally falls out of the chair to stop a play against the opposing team, this is a Class A technical foul.
 - i. When an offensive player has control of the ball and taps, directs, or throws the ball off the defensive person or wheelchair with the intent to gain an advantage, it is a violation on the offense. The ball will be give out-of-bound at the closest point of violation to the defensive team.

9. Fouls and Penalties.

- a. Personal Foul – A player shall not contact an opponent or an opponent’s wheelchair with his/her hand unless such contact is only with the opponent’s hand while it is on the ball and is incidental to an attempt to play the ball. The wheelchair is considered a part of the player. The nature of the game, negligible contact is to the discretion of the officials. Intentional contact caused by a player to affect the progress or position of another player is a form of blocking, charging, holding, or pushing. Contact caused by the momentum of a chair by a player who had made no visible effort to stop his/her chair while moving in for a goal is a charge. It is a Class B technical foul for intentionally grabbing an opponent’s wheelchair to gain an advantage.
- b. Physical Advantage Foul (PAF) – All players must always remain firmly seated in the wheelchair, not using a functional leg or stump for physical advantage over an opponent (e.g. raising out of his/her chair or using the heel on the floor to maneuver the chair or leaning forward on the footrest to guard a player). A defensive player guarding an offensive player may not gain an advantage by leaning so far forward that his/her footrest touch the floor.
 - i. Any infraction of this constitutes a physical advantage foul (PAF). The offended team is awarded two free throws and is awarded the ball out-of-bounds at either end of the division line.
 - 1. The scorer will be officially responsible for recording these infractions with a “PAF” in the foul column.
 - 2. Three PAFs constitute an automatic dismissal from the game.
 - 3. PAFs will be counted towards the total number of personal and team fouls.

- 10. Players Leaving the Court. Players who intentionally leave the playing court to gain an advantage shall be given a Class B technical foul for each infraction. An example of this, is when a defensive player who is back picked and pinned on the sideline by an offensive player, leaves the playing court along the sideline to get away from the offensive player. Another example is the offensive player who cuts the baseline in the front court and the defensive player in good chair position does not allow the offensive player to cut into the lane area, the offensive player then leaves the playing court underneath

the basket and moves to the other side of the court to gain the offensive advantage.

- a. During the game, a player's chair momentum and speed may cause the player to go out of bounds. The player shall return to play in the approximate location in which they left the court.
- b. Post Play. An offensive or defensive player dislodging an opponent from an established position by pushing or backing in shall be a personal foul on the offending player.

11. Free Throw Lane Requirement. A maximum of six players (four players for the defensive team and two players for the offensive team) shall be permitted on the lane. All other players shall remain behind the free throw line extended and behind the three-point line.

- a. The two-lane spaces closest to the end line shall remain open.
- b. The first lane space on each side of the lane that is closer to the free-thrower is designated for the opponents of the free-thrower.
- c. Teammates of the free-thrower shall not occupy spaces designated for opponents of the free-thrower; opponents of the free-thrower shall not occupy spaces reserved for teammates of the free-thrower.
- d. Wheelchairs that cannot fit inside the second or third free throw lane space will not be allowed entrance on the free throw lane during free throws.

12. Bench Decorum

- a. Unsportsmanlike Conduct. Coaches, bench personnel, and players are held to the same standard and are not allowed to engage in any unsportsmanlike conduct as judged by the official. Repeated or prolonged violations of this behavior should result in a technical foul being assessed to the egregious party. More egregious conduct violations while inside or outside the coaching box, should be properly and consistently penalized with a technical foul without warning. Examples of egregious conduct include but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Comments directed at or referring to any game official that questions the integrity of the official. (i.e. references to the number of fouls called against the team, suggest an official is cheating a team, etc.)
 - ii. Using profanity, taunting, or baiting another player or bench personnel. Pointing a finger or making obscene gestures or deregulatory remarks or personal comments during the game about race, ethnicity, religion, gender, etc.
 - iii. Prolonged, negative responses to a call/no-call which is disrespectful or unprofessional such as thrashing of arms in disgust, running and jumping in disbelief, removing a coat and throwing a coat, throwing objects or materials on the sideline, approaching or charging an official in an aggressive manner.
 - iv. Continued criticism during a game regarding the same or previous incident.

13. Coaching box. Failure to comply with the rule results in a distinctive advantage that is not within the spirit and intent of the rules. After the warning for the first violation, a technical foul should be assessed for any subsequent violation.

14. Assistant coaches and bench personnel. All bench personnel are required to be seated except the head coach while the ball is live except to react spontaneously to an outstanding play. Then they must immediately sit down. The official should warn the head coach of any violations and ask the coach to take care of the situation. This is the official warning. Any future violations or blatant violations shall result in a Class B technical foul that is assessed to the head coach.

15. **Incidental and Intentional Personal Contact.** When ten players in wheelchairs are moving rapidly in a limited area, some contact is certain to occur. Contact, which is entirely incidental to an effort by opponents to reach a loose ball, or accidental contact, which may result when opponents are in equally favorable positions to perform normal defensive or offensive movements should not be considered illegal. Likewise, accidental contact which does not hinder the opponent from participating in normal defensive or offensive movements, and which is not the result of carelessness, should be considered incidental. If, however, a player approaches an opponent from behind or from an unfavorable position, such that he/she has no reasonable chance to play the ball without making contact, the responsibility is on the player in the unfavorable position.
- Intentional chair contact caused by a player to affect the progress or position of another player is a form of blocking, charging, holding, or pushing. Note: Players that jam an opponent intentionally with their foot plates to stop the movement of the opposing player is a foul. This commonly happens when the offensive team makes a shot, and then transitions into a full court defense, and the defensive players will jam their footplates into their opponents that are moving towards their front court.
16. **In Screening Situation**
- If offensive player takes a position behind and so close to stationary defensive player (beyond the visual field) that a contact foul occurs when the defensive player makes normal chair movement, the offensive player is responsible for the foul. If the offensive screener is at the side or in front of the stationary defensive player, any distance short of contact is legal.
 - If offensive player takes a position in the path of a moving defensive player, who does not have the ball, so quickly that the defensive player cannot stop or change direction in time to avoid contact, then the offensive player is responsible if a contact foul occurs.

YOUTH PLAY

Youth play is governed by all of the above rules with the following modifications:

- Players – Only five players of a team are allowed on the floor during play. Players are not allowed to play zone defense. Defensive players may not engage in full-court press.
- Substitution - Every player must play a minimum of one period in each half of the game. All players must play at least one complete, continuous eight-minute period per half. The coach has the option as to which of the three periods in each half to play all of their players. Players that are playing in the first period of the half cannot be substituted (except for injuries). Players that have completed a period may be substituted for in their second or third period of play in each half. The coach is responsible for making sure that all members of the team play. If for medical reasons a player, that is present, cannot play, the coach must notify the official, scorekeeper, and the opposing coach before the game.
- Defensive Point of Pickup – There is no full-court press allowed at any time during the game.
- The initial point of pickup is the outer edge of the center jump circle which is six feet beyond the half court line. After the initial point of pickup, the defense can extend and guard the offense until the half-court line. The initial point of pickup can start when the offensive player with the ball crosses the outer edge of the center jump circle extended. This rule applies during the entire game. This will allow the offense to cross the half court line uncontested but will allow the defense to pick up before the three- point line.
 - If a team goes up by 20 points, the point of pickup will become the top of the key extended (also described as the three-point line extended).
- Free Throws
 - In venues where attachable goals are used all players, regardless of age, must shoot free

throws from the foul line.

- b. In venues where the goals lower from 10 feet to 8 ½ feet, players aged 6-12 may shoot free throws from the hash marks located just inside the foul line. Players age 13- 14 must shoot from the foul line.
- c. For a shooter who shoots free throws from the hash marks, two offensive players and two defensive players may line the lane with the defensive players being closer to the basket. The third space from the basket must remain empty during a free throw so that no player is lining the lane even with or behind the shooter.

6. Foul Limit – There will now be a six foul limit per player.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. All adult players will use a standard men's basketball (22 oz. 29.5" circumference).
2. All youth players will use a standard women's NCAA basketball.
3. The wheelchair used in competition shall meet the following requirements:
 - a. The maximum height from the floor to the top of the seat rail shall not exceed 21 inches. Measurements must be taken with the front castor(s) in the forward driving position and player may be asked to get out of the chair during the measurement.
 - b. Seat rail measurement. Some wheelchairs have a continuous seat/back rail that obscures the appropriate measurement point of the seat rail. Generally, the continuous rail has a horizontal portion that supports the seat fabric. A curved (upward) portion near the rear of the seat area, and a vertical portion that supports the back of the wheelchair. The measurement point for a continuous seat/back rail should be at the highest point of that portion of the rail with seat fabric attached; thus, the curved portion should not be measure unless there is seat fabric attached.
 - c. The part of the footrest or roll bar that projects forward the furthest and which would be the first point of contact with another wheelchair in head-on contact must be at a height of not more than five inches from the ground or court.
 - d. Use of a cushion is condoned, being of common understanding that it is specifically for therapeutic reasons. As such, it shall be composed of any therapeutic material and shall not exceed four inches at its highest point (thickness). Pneumatic cushions and contoured cushions are permissible providing they are commercially manufactured for therapeutic use and do not exceed thickness restrictions (above). Cushions composed of nontherapeutic materials, such as hard (non- pliable) rubber, wood, or other solid composition, shall not be acceptable. In all situations, the decision of the officials shall be final.
 - e. The footrest must have rounded or smooth corners. Door bumpers, knobs, projections of folding footrest, or other projections from the body of the footrest, which may readily become entangled in the wheels and/or spokes of another chair or used to hook and/or hold an opponent, shall not be allowed.
 - f. Any chair equipped with either a horizontal bar behind the backrest or push handles extending to the rear, must have these areas sufficiently padded to prevent injury to another player.
 - g. When the chair is in the forward driving position the chair is permitted to have anti-tip casters attached to the underside or rear of the chair. The lowest point of the anti-tip caster cannot exceed one inch from the floor nor can any part of the anti-tip caster project from the chair rearward so that it would extend past any part of the rear wheels.

4. Mandatory uniforms shall be matching jerseys with factory type legal numbers only on front and back described in the Georgia High School Association Rule Book. Legal numbers consist of 0, 00 (0 and 00 cannot be used on same team) 1-5, 10-15, 20-25, 30-35, 40-45 and 50-55. It is legal for players to wear matching color or white t-shirts only under game jerseys.
 - a. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. Penalty – Admin Tech per jersey
 - i. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. (**EFFECTIVE January 2025**)
 - b. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - i. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.
 - c. No other sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments.
Penalty: Illegal Equipment
 - d. Emblem/Logo/Picture Placement: GRPA waives the GHSA and NFHSA penalties for logos and clipart placement on basketball uniforms. No technical foul will be administered.
5. The Host Agency shall be responsible for supplying scrimmage vests in events where jerseys need to be opposite colors. A coin toss shall be conducted and the winner shall have the option of whether to wear the scrimmage vests or original jerseys.

SECTION B – PLAYING COURT REQUIREMENTS

1. The playing court shall be a rectangular surface free from obstructions and with minimum dimensions of 84 feet in length and 50 feet in width.
2. Basket height for youth play will be set at 8 ½ feet.

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

Beginning in 2020 this will be an open invitational state event. Your SAC Chairs will need to be notified and teams entered in state by agency directors and GRPA SAC members. The GRPA SAC will determine when district tournaments will be moving forward.

District level competition will be single elimination and in basketball is to be completed as follows: all youth divisions by the Saturday before the state tournament and all adult divisions by the Saturday before their state tournament. Pool play is optional.

SECTION B – STATE

State level competition will be single elimination with pool play. Any forfeit done during pool play will result in a \$750.00 fine payable to state host. For other forfeit information please see page 25.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – GAME OFFICIALS

1. All officials will be required to maintain active membership in GHSA, NFHS or National Wheelchair Basketball Association and pass all certification, eligibility, and conduct requirements as stipulated by

NWBA, GHSA, or NFHS.

2. The Referee shall not permit any player to wear braces or other equipment, which in is his/her judgement, are dangerous to other players or designed to increase height or to gain a physical advantage. The official shall not permit wheelchairs to be mechanized in any form for turning of for forward, backward, or upward propulsion. The official shall inspect wheelchairs and prohibit their use if said chairs deviate to be unfair or unsafe to others. The official shall have in their possession a metal tape rule to determine all wheelchair measuring parts such as: seat rail, foot platform, bumpers, and cushions. The official shall inspect all wheelchairs prior to the starting of the game or prior to a player entering the game with a chair that was not inspected. A Class A technical foul will be called for illegal measurements discovered while in play, providing the officials correctly measure the chair before it was put in play. The officials shall disqualify offenders for any repeated infraction of this rule.
3. An equipment time out may be granted to the team in control of the ball or to any team during a dead ball. This shall be 45 seconds in length. A warning signal will be sounded 15 seconds before the expiration of the 45 second time limit to repair or replace a player's equipment or to replace the player or the player's wheelchair. The signal also shall be sounded at the end of 45 seconds.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11.

For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE V – YOUTH TRACK AND FIELD

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. There are four age divisions for both boys and girls. Participants must be 6 by the age control date: age on December 31, current year.
 - a. 8 & Under
 - b. 10 & Under
 - c. 12 & Under
 - d. 14 & Under
2. Allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home county or agency has no track and field program.
 - b. No recruiting by the adjoining agency.
 - c. Cannot cross district lines
 - d. Host agency endorsed participant
 - e. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - f. Must participate in the sport program in the Host agency program.
 - g. If a participant lives in an “A” class county, they cannot compete in “B/C” county. They must compete in the nearest “A” county. “B/C” may compete up in “A”.
 - h. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with the list and home county of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
 - i. Participants must be approved by the District Athletic Chair and any and all protest of crossovers must be done prior to district competition. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - j. To allow a participant to compete for the same team in GRPA that they do year round, as long as it is a GRPA agency team. The participant must have an AAU membership card at participant check-in. A 90 day turnover period would be required for AAU membership and meet AAU guidelines.
3. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, or USA TRACK.
4. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event. (Upon the discretion of the meet director and/or referee.)

SECTION B – ENTRIES

1. In the State Meet, an agency may not submit more than three entries per event in each age division, but only one 4 X 100 relay and one 4 X 400 relay. (APPROVED RULING: By majority vote and consent of at least one of its State Athletic Committee Members, a district may decrease or increase the number of entries in district-level competition.)

2. A district not conducting a district track and field meet may allow one agency to represent its district at the State Meet with no more than two entries.
3. Individual competitors may not be entered in more than three individual events, two field and one running or vice versa, plus the 2 relays in that age division.
4. There will be three entries per district to the State Meet. A maximum of three entries will be accepted in any classification in all events. **Any ties at the district or agency competition must be decided before entries are sent to the state host.** Four or more entries will not be accepted by the state host.
5. In relays, two alternate runners can be listed and they are the only ones who can substitute in case of injury or sickness.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. GRPA will not utilize starting blocks.
2. The National Federation (National Alliance Edition) Track and Field Rules is the official guide for GRPA meets, with exceptions as may be stated in this manual.
3. All participating agencies are required to attend one of the statewide track meetings/webinars to cover the rules and regulations for the state track meet. Agencies that do not attend must pay a fine of \$200 to the GRPA office. It is **“Strongly Recommended”** that both an agency member and track coach from each agency or team attends a track meeting/s/webinar to ensure that all necessary parties are clear on any rule changes or clarifications.
4. Have host produce a Power Point that highlights guidelines for track participation and display power point on GRPA website 60 days in advance of track meet or have someone tape a video that is put on the GRPA website and have it displayed on the website
5. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
6. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
7. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – EVENTS

1. Events in each age division are:

Event	Age Group	Description
50 Meter	8U, 10U	Preliminaries & Finals
100 Meter	All	Preliminaries & Finals
200 Meter	All	Preliminaries & Finals
400 Meter	All	Preliminaries & Finals (8 & under will be a final)
800 Meter (waterfall start)	All	Finals Only
80 Meter Hurdles 100 Meter Hurdles	10U, 12U, 14U	Preliminaries & Finals (Timed Finals if less than 8 runners)

1600 Meter (waterfall start)	10U, 12U, 14U	Finals Only
3200 Meter (waterfall start)	12U, 14U	Finals Only
4x100	All	Finals Only
4x400	All	Finals Only
Standing Long Jump	All	
Softball Throw	All	Finals Only
Shot Put	10U, 12U, 14U	Finals Only
Mini-Javelin	8U, 10U, 12U = 300 grams	Finals Only
Mini-Javelin	14U = 600 grams	Finals Only
Discus	12U, 14U	Finals Only
Running Long Jump	All	Finals Only
High Jump	10U, 12U, 14U	Finals Only

2. The order of events at the State Track Meet is as follows:
 - i. Friday – 4:30 PM – Host Welcome and Parade of Athletes
 - ii. Friday – 5:00 PM – Events will begin.
3. Any change to the event order by the State Host must be approved by the state athletic committee no later than their March meeting. See the final packet from the host for the event schedule.
4. Awards are to be presented immediately following each event final.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

1. Relay teams in district level competition who qualify for the State Meet should run in the State Meet except in case of injury.
 - a. Relay teams will be assigned lanes by random selection prior to the start of the meet.
 - b. International exchange zones in 4x100 relay. Can be used for other races as approved by the meet director.
 - c. Relay members must be on roster and in the same age group.
 - d. Names of relay entries must be submitted to the state host prior to the state entry deadline with the understanding they can be changed prior to their competition due to their illness or injury.
 - e. Two alternate runners can be listed for each relay and they are the only ones that can substitute in case of injury or sickness.
2. If two or more competitors tie, they will draw lots for medals or other awards and privileges (unless other provisions have been made).
3. In the event of a tie at any height or distance in the finals of a field event, places shall be awarded as follows:
 - a. For places in jumping for height (high jump):
 - b. The competitor with the lowest number of trials for the height at which the tie occurs shall be awarded at the highest place.
 - c. If the tie still remains, the competitor with the lowest total number of misses throughout the competition (up to and including the height last cleared, shall be awarded the higher place.
 - d. If a tie remains after the above, the competitor with the lowest total number of trials (whether successful or not) throughout the competition, up to and including the highest

height cleared, shall be awarded the higher place.

- e. If the tie remains after applying all of the above and:
 - i. If it concerns first place, the competitors tying shall have one more attempt for the height at which they failed, and if no decision is reached, the bar shall be lowered or raised by intervals of one inch in the high jump. Each competitor shall try once at each height until the winner is determined.
 - ii. If it concerns any place other than first, the competitors shall be awarded the same place in the competition and medals, ribbons, awards or privileges determined by lot as in ties for track events.
- f. No misses shall be charged to a competitor for a pass height.
- g. In all field events, each competitor will take alternative trials in successive order by entry list (i.e., no competitor will be allowed to take three successive trials).
- h. A run by or run up is not a try if done within the time frame.
 - i. For places determined by distance (standing long jump, running long jump, softball throw and shot put):
 1. If the distance resulting from the best performances of competitors is identical, the higher place is awarded to the competitor whose second-best performance is better than the second-best performance of any other competitor tied for that particular place.

4. **Each competitor shall be allowed three trials in the finals of all field events** (two at each height in the high jump). All state level field events are finals. All field events shall be run in a manner as not to allow an individual to use all their tries in succession, unless they were at another event and all others have completed their tries. If they must try in succession, they will be allowed up to two minutes rest between tries.

- a. Starting Heights for high jump are as follows:

Boys		Girls	
10U	3'0"	10U	3'0"
12U	3'4"	12U	3'4"
14U	3'8"	14U	3'8"

5. In the high jump, the bar shall be raised in 2" increments until only 4 jumpers are left, then raised by 1" increments until a winner. The jumpers must attempt to jump within 30 seconds after their name is called or a try will be charged.
6. In all track events, two false starts shall constitute the disqualification of the runner guilty of the infraction.
7. Shot Put Rules
 - a. The shot shall be put from the shoulder with one hand only and the competitor shall not allow the shot to pass behind or below the shoulder during the attempt. No harness or mechanical device attached to the hand or arm shall be used. Taping the wrist, palm or back of the hand is permissible. It is also permissible to tape only two fingers, provided they are adjoining and taped tightly together. However, there shall be no connecting tape device nor covering between the fingers and palm or back of the hand, or between the fingers and the wrist.
 - b. The put must be made from the circle. It is a foul if the competitor, after stepping into the circle, fails to pause before starting his put, or touches the circle, (not including the inner face of the

stop board or the band if one is used) or the ground outside the circle, or the top of the stop board with any portion of his or her body or apparel before the put is marked. It is also a foul if the shot falls outside of the sector, or if the competitor, after having completed his or her put, does not leave the back half of the circle.

- c. A foul put is not measured but is counted as a trial. Measurement is from the nearest edge of the first mark made by the shot to the point on the inside of the stop board nearest such a mark.
- d. All participants will throw the same shot put.

8. Standing Long Jump

- a. A competitor may (1) rock forward and backward lifting heels and toes alternatively from the surface but may not lift either foot completely from the ground nor slide it along in any direction of the ground; (2) both feet must be parallel to each other and equal distance from the scratch line before jumping; (3) both feet must leave the ground at the same time.
- b. The jumper shall take off from behind the scratch line. If the jumper's shoe extends over the scratch line or makes a mark in front of it, the jump shall not be measured, but shall count as a trial.
- c. **Each jumper is entitled to three jumps.** Each jump shall be recorded. The contestant with the longest jump will be considered the winner.
- d. The standing long jump will be done in sand. Each legal jump shall be measured from the scratch line or its extension to the point touched by the person or apparel of the jumper which is nearest the scratch line.

9. Softball Throw

- a. Ball throwing competition may be conducted with a rubber, leather, or synthetic cover 11" (ages 8U & 10U) 12" (12U & up) softball shall be used for all throws. All participants will use the same type of ball as furnished by the host.
- b. The throw may be from either a stand or with a run-up.
- c. Stepping over or on the line constitutes a foul. A contestant is permitted one run-up without releasing the ball. Failure to release the ball on a second run-up shall constitute a trial.
- d. **Each thrower will be allowed three trials.** The longest throw will be considered the winner.

10. Javelin

- a. Each contestant is entitled to one practice throw and **three recorded throws**.
- b. Javelins with plastic bodies and rubber tips will be utilized.
- c. Age groups 7-8, 9-10 and 11-12 will utilize a 300 gram javelin.
- d. The 13-14 age group will utilize a 600 gram javelin.
- e. Contestants will use implements provided by the meet host and will not use their personal implements.
- f. A contestant may not touch the throw line (white line on ground to throw from). If a contestant touches the line or goes over the line, either during the attempt or in the follow through of the attempt, the attempt will be recorded as a scratch.
- g. If the javelin after thrown first touches the ground outside of the designated side boundaries, the attempt shall be recorded as a scratch.
- h. Measurements will be taken from the edge of the throw line closest to the contestant. The

mark will be placed where any portion of the javelin first touches the ground. The measurement will be made from the back portion of the throw line where the contestant made the throw, which means the measuring tape may be stretched diagonally to record the attempt if the attempt was not straight.

- j. Measurements will be recorded in feet and inches and will be measured and recorded to the closest $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.

11. Places will be determined by second or third place throws or jumps if the first ones is a tie.

12. **Tiebreaker-** (The following will be used for all field events except High Jump.) The contestant with the furthest recorded attempt will be considered the winner. In the event of a tie between furthest attempts, the second furthest attempt amongst those tied will be used as a tiebreaker. If the contestants are still tied after the second furthest attempt, the third furthest attempt shall be used as a tiebreaker. If the contestants are still tied after all three attempts, they will both be deemed the winner.

13. Hurdles

a. Hurdle Specifications are as follows:

Division	Distance	Hurdles	Height	To First	Interval	To Finish
10U	80M	8	30"	12m	7.5m	15.5m
12U	80M	8	30"	12m	7.5m	15.5m
14U Girls	100M	10	30"	13m	8.5m	10.5.5m
14U Boys	100M	10	33"	13m	8.5m	10.5.5m

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Shoes are mandatory for all track and field events. Shoes must comply with USA Track and Field rules as stated in Section 6 A-1a (may not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ " metal spikes). If discovered in the bullpen with illegal shoes, a warning will be given. Shoes identified as illegal at the finish line will cause disqualification of the participant from that event.
2. Equipment to be provided by the Host Agency for GRPA Track and Field Meets shall include the following:
 - a. Scorer's table located in an area favorable to the meet officials and conducive to accurate and timely recordings and results and posting events. It is recommended that a loud public address system be available.
 - b. A 6-lb. shot put.
 - c. Javelins
 - i. Must have plastic bodies and rubber tips will be utilized.
 - ii. Age groups 8U-12U will utilize a 300 gram javelin.

- iii. The 14U age group will utilize a 600 gram javelin.
- d. Discus- 1K Discus will be provided by the host.
- e. Rakes, measuring instruments, and if necessary a modified take-off board designed or marked according to regulation, but closer to the jumping pit for younger age divisions in the broad jump event.
- f. In the softball throw – six softballs are required. The specifications are: a rubber, leather, or synthetic cover 11" (ages 8U & 10U) and 12" (ages 12U & up) softball. A visible tape with the feet and inches marked on it must be stretched on the ground to measure the distances of all competitors.
- g. Standards and, if necessary, modified standards designed or constructed according to regulations to allow jumpers in younger age divisions to jump at lesser heights than the usual minimum of four feet found on most regulation standards, crossbars and landing pits filled with soft material other than sand or sawdust and modified as necessary to allow younger age divisions to reach at least the height of the landing pit in the high jump.
- h. Track event equipment: starting pistol with .22 or .32 caliber black powder cartridges, one or more whistles for the chief finish judge and starter or clerk of the course, stopwatches (minimum six to eighteen with extras in case of malfunction), legal batons for relays and any other necessary equipment. Optional equipment would include finish yarn, and judges' stand and lane indicators. One .22 or .32 caliber pistol will be used for starts.
- i. Timing:
 - i. Fully-automatic electronic timing shall be required for State level Track competition, and is highly recommended for District competition. **If a district is unable to secure automatic timing for their district meet and has handwritten time for that meet, they are required to submit completed results to a timer for entry into a HYTEK file. The district host must submit results to the state host via a HYTEK file.** Times shall be reported to two decimal places only (100ths of a second). Times shall be listed in hundredths only. All state records shall be reported to the hundredth of a second with no rounding off.
 - ii. Back-up timing systems shall be available at all times when electronic timing is being used. Stopwatches (minimum six to eighteen with extras in case of malfunction) This could consist of (a) a manual backup built into the timing system plus one watch per lane or (b) three watches per lane. A minimum of one across-the-board finish judge or picking judge shall be used at all times with either backup system.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Agency team members, including all boys and girls, should wear like jerseys. Agency boys' team must be dressed alike, and the girls must be dressed alike from the waist up. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. **(EFFECTIVE January 2025)**
 - b. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - i. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach the bases must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.
2. It is mandatory that team members be in uniform while actually competing in events. (APPROVED

RULING: It is conceivable that an agency with limited supply of same color jersey could continuously exchange these jerseys prior to the start of an event, but such a practice shall not be allowed during the conduct of an event among competitors still actively jumping, throwing, or running).

3. No jewelry is allowed. (A watch is not considered jewelry and may be worn)

SECTION C – AREA REQUIREMENTS

Effective 2004, the track shall be eight lanes, (*see below) but the length of the track is often influenced by the available space, but a 1/4-mile or 400 meter track is standard. It has two straight sides and two curved ends. The length of the straight sides is approximately the same length as the curved ends. Field events are usually conducted inside the oval track and non-competing participants, coaches, attendants, and spectators are provided an assembly area outside the track.

NOTE: The putting circle for the shot put event shall have an inside diameter of seven feet. The circumference shall be marked with a metal, wood or plastic band which shall not rise more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " above the level of the circle or if the circle has a surface of concrete, asphalt, wood or other hard material, a painted line two inches wide may be substituted for the band. A concrete surface with a $\frac{1}{64}$ " roughness is recommended. A stop board (4" height and 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " width and 4' length) shall be firmly fixed at the front inner edge of the circle, which should be the boundary lines extended.

ARTICLE IV – MEETS AND AWARDS

SECTION A – STATE

1. All entries to the State Meet must be done by the District Host.
2. **NOTE:** Participants in relays can be changed between preliminary and finals if an injury occurs in the relays only.
 - a. During the State Track Meet, there must be two bullpens (either one for A and one for B/C or one for track and one for field events).
 - b. Use two different color ID bibs (on chest), one for each classification.
3. In each preliminary (qualifying heats) running event in each age division, except the 800-meter and the 1600 meter runs, there will be two or three heats in the State meet. Lane assignments will be determined by the host, with equal first and second place entries in each heat if possible. The State Host Agency and State Athletic Committee Chair shall make heat assignments as deemed necessary.
4. The 200 meter dash will be run on a curve, the 800m will use a staggered start, and the 1600m will use a waterfall start.
5. Each District's Meet Director (designated Tournament Director) is responsible for submitting state entries prior to the State Meet to be in the hands of the State Host by 5:00 PM Tuesday. Entries shall consist of the following information.
 - a. District
 - b. Age Division, Sex, Event
 - c. Place in District, First and Last Name, Agency, Time-Distance-Height
6. **Fully automatic electric timing is required for state-level competition and is highly recommended for District competition. If a District cannot secure electronic timing, the district is still required to submit complete results to a timer for entry into a Hytek file. All District results must be submitted**

to the state host via a Hytek file.

7. Failure to submit district results electronically to the state host will result in a \$250 fine, plus scratch fees at the regular price. Failure to pay the district or state host within the allotted time mentioned above can result in fees being doubled by the host agency, as approved by the SAC Chair. If not received within the time frame, Districts will be billed, and they are responsible for collecting from the agency.

8. Usage of scratch forms will be mandatory for the state meet.

9. Awards- Medals will be awarded for 1st – 3rd place and ribbons awarded for 4th – 8th place. State meet host must provide an awards podium for 1st-8th place. “A”, “B/C” Meet: Awards will be given to the top eight finishers in each event from the finals. Awards given are per state awards contract and cannot be substituted or changed. If emergencies arise then the state athletic committee chair in consultation with the GRPA Executive Director will determine what course of action to take. Team scores will be provided by the host, but no awards given.
10. Medals will be given to places 1st-3rd and ribbons to 4th-8th. Awards MUST be labeled by place and must have swimmers name, place, time and date (HY-TEK Meet Manager can produce and stick labels on back cover or ribbon tab).

EXAMPLE:

Second District: 10 year old girls, 50 meter dash
 1st – Canya Comegetme, Sigsbee, 7.5 seconds.
 2nd Ima Gonnagetu, Whoville, 7.6 seconds.
 3rd Shesa Prettygirl, Willacoochee, 7.7 seconds.
 4th Hesa Richboy, Funston, 7.8 seconds.
 5th Itsa Gonnarain, Unsocial Circle 7.9 seconds.
 6th Ucan Runfast, Gratis, 8.0 seconds.
 7th Swing Andamiss, Dudley, 8.1 seconds.
 8th U.R. Outtahere, Dawgville, 8.2 seconds.

Allow results from preliminaries to be used to determine final times for events that are cancelled in finals. If finals have begun, the final times in events that have been completed would count. However, if due to inclement weather or any other reason that an event cannot be completed in finals, times achieved in prelims will be considered timed finals.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS

SECTION A – HOST

1. The Host shall provide a minimum number of competent adults in accordance with Rule II, Article IV to serve as:
 - a. Meet Director
 - b. Starter
 - c. Clerk of the Course
 - d. Head Finish Judge-Timer and Finish Judge-Timers (lane inspectors)
 - e. Head Field Judges (for each field event competition)
 - f. Scores
 - g. other assistant officials are not required, but are recommended as specified in Rule II, Article IV

2. The Host shall be responsible for providing areas and equipment, electronic timing system, releasing publicity, and organizing competition for the meet.

SECTION B – OFFICIALS

1. The State Athletic Committee shall serve as the Games Committee (Jury of Appeals), and the Chair or his assigned representative shall serve as Referee for the State Meet. Each District Commissioner is encouraged to provide a similar authority for district meets.
2. Host must provide a minimum of 3 qualified officials by NFHS, GHSA, USTAF, or AAU to monitor all exchange zones during relays.

SECTION C – COMPETITIONS AND ATTENDANTS

Attendants, coaches, spectators, parents or persons not designated as meet officials shall not accompany a competitor to the starting line or during a race. Any competitor will be disqualified if, in the opinion of the judges or meet officials, he or she has in any way been aided by a coach, teammate or anyone connected directly or indirectly with the team concerned. Such aid would include running alongside a teammate, being stationed at various points near the track, or located near any field events for the purpose of aiding or coaching the competitor after the race or field event has started. The degree of enforcement shall be announced by the Meet Director prior to the Meet.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

Protests and appeals are authorized only under the stipulations found in this manual.

**For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-12.
For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.**

ARTICLE VII – DEFAULTS

Any default that is not reported to the State Host at least three days prior to the State Meet will result in that agency being fined \$10.00 per person, this shall be per meet not per event. No alternatives or changes are allowed at the Meet. [Relay team counts as one default. Youth are fined but not suspended.] Note: No alternatives or changes are allowed at the State Meet.

NOTE: The top eight over all times from the preliminary heats will advance to the finals.

NOTE: Subject to change by Host to adjust heats.

RULE VI – YOUTH AND ADULT TENNIS

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. There are six age divisions for youth and three age divisions for adults divided by NTRP. Adult age on December 30 and Youth age on September 1.
 - a. **Youth – Two Divisions – Recreational and Open (USTA Rules) Recreational** – All youth rules as outlined below. **USTA Divisions** - All playing rules, court dimensions, racquet sizes, and balls must abide by USTA. Participants must be age 7 by the age control date.
 - i. 8 & Under
 - ii. 10 & Under
 - iii. 12 & Under
 - iv. 14 & Under
 - v. 16 & Under
 - vi. 18 & Under
 - b. **Adults** – All divisions are open to men and women and will consist of Men's Doubles, Women's Doubles, and Mixed Doubles. Players can compete in 2 events. Each draw consists of 4 levels: 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, and 4.5.
 - i. 18 and Over
 - ii. 40 and Over
 - iii. 55 and Over
 - iv. The Adult program for GRPA Tennis will use the **NATIONAL TENNIS RATING PROGRAM (NTRP)**:
 1. The National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) is the official system for determining the levels of competition for GRPA and USTA leagues. The USTA NTRP Computer Rating System assigns ratings based on play in the local league and at championship levels during the current league year. GRPA and USTA uses this system to determine player skill-level eligibility for the various league types.
2. The USTA publishes Early Start Ratings in July each year. These ratings are used for GRPA Seasonal Tournament. Before December 1 of each year, the USTA publishes the Year-End Ratings.
3. NTRP computer ratings are managed exclusively by the USTA. GRPA does not set or control NTRP ratings. For complete information about NTRP, visit the USTA's NTRP webpage at <http://www.usta.com/Play-Tennis/USTA-League/Information/ratings/>.
4. Players with no current computer rating must self-rate. Players with expired ratings will not be allowed to self-rate at a lower level than their last valid NTRP rating. For information about self-rating, see the USTA's website: [www.usta.com/Play-Tennis/USTA-League/Information/About NTRP](http://www.usta.com/Play-Tennis/USTA-League/Information/About%20NTRP). Also, see the Frequently Asked Questions items regarding NTRP ratings for additional information.
5. Allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions.
 - a. Home agency/county has no tennis program.
 - b. No recruiting by the adjoining agency.

- c. Cannot cross district lines
 - d. Host agency endorsed participant
 - e. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - f. Must participate in the sport program in the Host agency program.
 - g. If a participant lives in an “A” class county, they cannot compete in a “B/C” county. They must compete in the nearest “A” county. “B/C” may compete up in “A.”
 - h. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and home county of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
 - i. Participants must be approved by District Athletic Chair and any and all protest of crossovers must be done prior to district competition. Once approved they are legal throughout District and State.
- 6. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, or GHSA.
 - 7. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

SECTION B – ENTRIES AND FEES

- 1. Any agency may submit no more than four entries per event in each age division. (APPROVED RULING: A district by majority vote and consent of at least one of its State Athletic Committee Members may increase or decrease the number of entries in district level competition.)
- 2. A district not conducting a district tennis tournament may allow one agency to represent its district at the State Tournament.
- 3. Entry fee(s) must accompany entries (\$10.00/event for youth). All Adult Divisions will be \$30/doubles teams. Entries are invalidated if fees are not sent.
- 4. Alternates will be allowed on GRPA rosters for doubles competition with a maximum of one alternate in doubles and in mixed doubles: one male, one female.
- 5. A player is allowed to participate in all three categories of competition. This rule will supersede the USTA rule concerning the number of allowable matches per day.

ARTICLE II REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

- 1. GRPA tennis tournaments are governed by the current rules and regulations of the United States Tennis Association (USTA), with the exceptions as may be found in this Manual.
- 2. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
- 3. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
- 4. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – EVENTS

1. Events in each age division for male and female are:
 - a. In all youth divisions: Singles, Doubles and Mixed Doubles
 - b. In all adult divisions: Singles and Doubles and Mixed Doubles
2. The Order of Events at the State Tournament shall be determined by the State Host, with approval of the State Athletic Committee's Chair.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS**There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.**

1. The best 2 out of 3 sets using the no-add system shall be used in all matches; the 7-point tie breaker will be used in each set.
2. The 10-point tiebreaker shall be used to decide the 3rd set.
3. In 8U, 10U and 12U the coach may be allowed to give instruction in change over only.
4. Adult Scoring
 - a. All Doubles matches will be two out of three sets; a 10 point match tie-break in lieu of a third set (**first to 10 win by 2 points.**)
 - b. For any set tied at 6 games all, play a 12 point set tie-break (first to 7 win by 2 points). The player/team that begins serving the tie-break must RECEIVE serve at the beginning of the next set.

The Coman Tiebreak Procedure - The Coman Tiebreak Procedure is the same as the present tiebreak (set or match), except that ends are changed after the first point, then after every four points (i.e., after the 5th, 9th, 13th, 17th points, etc.), and at the conclusion of the tiebreak. The scoring in the Coman Tiebreak Procedure is the same as a traditional set or match tiebreak, and the procedure for playing the Coman Tiebreak is the same as a set or match tiebreak. For example, if the Coman Tiebreak Procedure is used when the set score is 6-6, the player whose turn it is to serve shall serve the first point from the deuce court; after the first point, the players shall change ends and the following two points shall be served by the opponent(s) (in doubles, the player of the opposing team due to serve next), starting with the ad court; after this, each player/team shall serve alternately for two consecutive points (starting with the ad court), changing ends after every four points, until the end of the tiebreak game.

When will it be used?

GRPA will use the Coman Tiebreak Procedure at all GRPA Adult District and State Championships for all set and match tie breaks. Use of the Coman Tiebreak Procedure is encouraged during local league play.

Principal Advantages

Fairness – By changing ends more frequently, the effects of the elements (sun, wind, etc.) are distributed more evenly between the two opponents as opposed to playing six consecutive points before changing ends.

In doubles, the server will always serve from the same end of the court, rather than having to serve from both ends.

Change sides on odd games unless both players/doubles teams agree to change only between sets.

Change ends at the end of each set unless the total number of games in a set is an even number (e.g. 6-4, 6-2, etc.), in which case the change is not made until the end of the first game of the next set.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Shoes are mandatory for all tennis events. Only smooth-soled tennis shoes may be worn on Grasstex and Laykold surfaces.
2. Equipment to be provided by the Host Agency for GRPA tennis tournament shall include the following:
 - a. Scorer's table located in an area favorable to the tournament officials and conducive to accurate, timely recording of results and posting scores. It is recommended that an information table near the scorer's table and a public address system is made available.
 - b. A minimum of six quality-surfaced tennis courts, marked in accordance with USTA regulations shall be made available for GRPA tennis matches. It is recommended that a minimum of twelve Grasstex or Laykold surface tennis courts be made available for the GRPA State Tennis tournament.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Contemporary playing attire for tennis to include tennis shoes, shorts or skirts and blouses, or suits for women is acceptable for GRPA competition. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty- Illegal Equipment
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. **(EFFECTIVE January 2025)**
2. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

ARTICLE IV – MEETS AND AWARDS

SECTION A – STATE

1. There will be two classifications for tennis:
 - a. The Youth Divisions will be set by State Host – TBA
 - b. The Adult Divisions will be set by State Host – TBA
 - c. Any revision of dates must be approved by the State Athletic Committee Chair.
2. The top four finishers in singles, doubles, and mixed doubles for all youth age divisions at the district level shall qualify for the State Tournament. Alternatives to GRPA rosters will be allowed for doubles competition with a maximum of 1 alternate in mixed doubles 1 male; 1 female.
3. Each youth entrant shall furnish one can of USTA approved balls per match, with the winner receiving an unopened can and the loser receiving a can of used balls. The Adult host will provide USTA approved balls.
4. Pairings or seeds for the State Tournament shall be determined by the State Host. Acceptable seeding practices will be allowed. District level first place finishers shall not be required to play each other in the opening round. Byes, if available will be given to district first place finishers. The two district representatives will be placed in opposite brackets so they will not meet until the finals. Distance and travel time should be considered in setting up the bracket times. (Cannot start Youth State Tournament

- before 8:30 AM on weekdays and cannot start Adult State Tournament before 7:00 PM on weekdays)
5. District tennis competition shall be completed by at least 14 days prior to State tournament.
 6. The youth tournament draw will include the winner and runner-up of each district. There are no limits of District entries in adult divisions. Adults must enter through the local GRPA member agency. Roster requirements are consistent with all other events as stated in this manual for adult competition.
 7. State awards will be awarded to Champion and Runner Up.
 8. Entries shall consist of the following:
 - a. District
 - b. Age Division, Sex, Event
 - c. Place in district, First and Last Name, Agency, Results

EXAMPLE:

First District; 10-year-old, Females,
 Singles: 1st – Itsa Outtabounds – Porterdale, 6-2, 3-6,
 6-4 2nd – Hewon Matchpoint – Funky Town, 2-6, 6-3,
 4-6

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS***SECTION A – OFFICIALS, JUDGES, EQUIPMENT, AND PUBLICITY***

The Host shall provide a minimum number of competent adults in accordance with Rule II, Article IV to serve as Tournament Meet Director and Scorer. Players may call their own lines and scores unless either requests a judge, in which case the Tournament Director shall assign a competent adult who may also be a competitor in another age division to judge the match. Such a judge must not be a representative from either of the players' agencies. The Host Agency shall be responsible for releasing publicity and organizing competition for the tournament.

SECTION B – TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

Members of the State Athletic Committee shall serve as the Tournament Committee (Jury of Appeals), and the Chair shall serve as Associate Meet Director for the State Meet. Each District Commissioner is encouraged to provide a similar authority for district tournaments.

SECTION C – COMPETITORS AND ATTENDANTS

USTA point penalty system rules regarding the conduct of players and spectators to include language, throwing or slamming balls or racquets, stalling, making comedy of a match, coaching or other outside distractions, line calls, cheating, gambling, drinking and flagrant violations will be strictly followed during warm-up and matches. Agencies shall be held accountable for the conduct of their participants and spectators.

ARTICLE VI – DEFAULTS

Any default that is not reported to the State Host at least seven days prior to the State Meet will result in that agency being fined \$10.00 per person and any tennis player who withdraws from state competition will be suspended from GRPA tennis for one year. (Youth and Adult defaults, Adults ONLY suspension).

ARTICLE VII – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

Protests and appeals are authorized only under the stipulations found in this Manual.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE VII – YOUTH BASEBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. There are seven age divisions for Youth Baseball. Participants must be 6 by the age control date: on June 30, current year. The divisions are as follows:
 - a. 8 & Under Machine Pitch
 - b. 8 & Under Coach Pitch
 - c. 10 & Under Live Pitch
 - d. 10 & Under Machine Pitch
 - e. 12 & Under Traditional
 - f. 12 & Under “Major”
 - g. 14 & Under
 - h. 17 & Under
2. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions.
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
3. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
4. There shall be two classifications in youth competition: A/ B and C - **Exception- 12 & Under Major will play a combined class at district and state.**
5. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, HIGHER GROUND, DOYLE, MVP, USA BASEBALL VIP.

6. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. Games in boys baseball at all levels of play are governed by the current rules and regulations of the GHSA Constitution and by-laws and the National Federation, National Alliance Edition, Baseball Rules with the exceptions as may be found in this manual.
2. Courtesy Runners
 - a. At any time, the team at-bat may use courtesy runners for the pitcher and/or the catcher. The same runner may not be used for both positions. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances.
 - b. The courtesy runner for the pitcher or catcher must be anyone not in the current batting order. It cannot be the same person for both positions. If no subs are available then the last batted out is to be utilized as the courtesy runner.
 - c. A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher and then be used as a substitute for another player in the half inning. (Penalty: out if discovered prior to next pitch).
 - d. In 10 & under with machine and in 8 & under, no courtesy runner for the pitcher is allowed.
3. Extra Players (EP) - A maximum of 2 EP's can be used at all levels of GRPA baseball. **No DH allowed.**
4. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
5. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
6. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

Division	Inning	Time*
8U 10U Live 10U Machine Pitch	6	1 hour 30 minutes
12U Traditional 12U Major	6	2 hours
14U 17U	7	2 hours

Official game clock will begin with the 1st live pitch.

**Time Limit Exception – Championship & “if” games*

1. A game which is tied after regulation play shall continue until a winner is determined. International Tie-breaker: After the regulation game or time limit has expired, the International tie-breaker will be used. The last scheduled batter will be placed on second base. This will continue until a winner is determined. Refer to USA Baseball rule 5, Section 11.
2. The score of a forfeited game shall be recorded as 7-0.
3. All GRPA district and state level tournament games must be played to conclusion. (EXAMPLE: Games starts on Monday and is rained out in the second inning, game resumes at the next playable opportunity regardless of length of delay or postponement from the exact point that the game was delayed or postponed). A game in progress must be completed before next game is started.
4. A game shall be considered complete after five innings with eight runs, four innings with twelve runs or three innings with fifteen or two innings with twenty runs ahead including championship game or if-needed championship game.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

1. Short Handed Rule. – Clarifications
 - a. **To start a game:**
 - i. A game may begin or finish with one less than required to start. (8U coach pitch and 8U and 10U machine pitch - 9, 10U Live and up - 8).
 - ii. The vacant position must be listed last in the batting order.
 - iii. An out will be recorded when the vacant position in the batting order is scheduled to bat.
 - b. **To continue a game** once started with a full team listed on the line-up card:
 - i. If a team begins play with the required number of players as listed, that team may continue a game with one less player than is currently in the batting order whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection. (# of Players- see below)
 - ii. If playing shorthanded and a substitute arrives, the substitute must be inserted immediately into the vacant spot. If the substitute refuses to enter for any reason that player becomes ineligible for the remainder of the game.
 - iii. If the player leaving the game is a runner or batter, the runner or batter shall be declared out
 - iv. When the player who has left the game is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat. An inning or the game can end with an automatic out. The player who has left the game cannot return to the line-up. EXCEPTION: A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return even after missing a turn at bat.
 - v. **A player that has been ejected cannot reenter the game; if removed by the umpire due to an injury, the player cannot return without a doctor's release; a player cannot re- enter if a concussion is suspected.**
2. A team can start or continue with eight players, unless the ninth player was ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct; then it is a forfeit. An 8U coach pitch, 8U or 10U team with machine pitch can start or continue with nine players, unless the tenth player was ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct; then it is a forfeit. A substitute removed may re-enter as a **legal** substitute for an injured player only if all other players have played when the team is **reduced to less than 8 players** (less than 9 players for pitching machine division).

3. During the school year, youth cannot start a new game after 10:00 PM Monday through Thursday except under extenuating circumstances. (weather, unusual delays, etc.)
4. The manager, coach or captain of a team making a substitution must immediately notify the Umpire-in-Chief who will suspend play and announce the change. Substitutes do not have to be listed on the line-up card.
5. The choice of first or last at-bat (home –visitors designation) shall be determined immediately prior to a tournament game by a coin toss supervised by the Tournament Director or his/her representative, except championship game is(a) below.
 - a. In the Championship Game, the undefeated team will have the choice of home or visitor. In the “IF” game, home or visitor will be determined by coin toss.
6. A player is not required to sit out the next game for failure to report as a substitute, removal of a helmet after a warning, or carelessly slinging a bat after a warning. A slung bat will result in a team warning for the offending team on the first offense. Each additional slung bat for that team will result in the batter being called out. If the same player continues to violate the rule, he can be removed from the game.
EXCEPTION: unsportsmanlike conduct. A forfeited game (not played) does not count as a sit out game.
7. ANY OF THE PLAYERS may withdraw and reenter once provided such player occupies the same batting position when he is in the lineup. The pitcher is governed by the provisions of Rule 7, Article 2 below. A substitute who is withdrawn may reenter one time in same batting order.
8. Pitching regulations: (for examples, see case book #'s 36-42 on pages 200-201)
Maximum number of pitches for a tournament in ALL youth baseball will be as follows: 10U = 120; 12U = 120; 14U = 160; 17U = 160. All other pitching rules will still apply.

- a. Baseball – Pitch Count. This rule is also in effect if two different levels of competition were ever played in successive days.

NOTE: In 10U Live, 12U, 14U, and 17U Divisions, the host or their designated staff of the district/state tournaments **are required** to interrupt the game once the pitcher has reached his pitch count limit for the day and/or the tournament.

10U Live and 12U Divisions: The maximum number of pitches that can be thrown in a game/day is 85 pitches. If a team plays multiple games in one day, the total pitches for the day per pitcher is 85 pitches. If a pitcher pitches less than 31 pitches in game one, they are eligible to pitch in game two but the pitch count will be a cumulative total for the day. If a pitcher throws 31 or more pitches in a game and is removed from the mound, they are not eligible to return to the mound in the same game or until their required rest period is observed.

A pitcher who throws 30 or less pitches in a day requires no rest period. A pitcher who throws between 31-60 pitches in a day requires one (1) calendar day of rest. A pitcher who throws between 61-85 pitches in a day requires two (2) calendar days of rest.

14U and 17U Divisions: The maximum number of pitches that can be thrown in a game/day is 105 pitches. If a team plays multiple games in one day, the total pitches for the day per pitcher is 105 pitches. If a pitcher throws 41 or more pitches in a game and is removed from the mound, they are not eligible to return to the mound in the same game or until their required rest period is observed.

A pitcher who throws 40 or less pitches in a day requires NO rest period. A pitcher who throws between 41-70 pitches in a day requires one (1) calendar day of rest. A pitcher who throws between 71-105 pitches in a day requires two (2) calendar days of rest. If a pitcher pitches less than 41 pitches in game one, they are eligible to pitch in game two but the pitch count will be a

cumulative total for the day.

- b. **In all age groups, once a pitcher leaves the mound, he/she cannot return to the mound in that game, regardless of the number of pitches thrown.**
 - c. In case of a suspended or forfeited game, the pitching regulations will still apply. The intent of this rule is for the pitchers arm to be protected. All rest periods apply.
 - d. Pitches thrown count for the day the game started. A pitcher that starts a game on Wednesday and the game goes past midnight may continue to pitch in that game. If this happens, his pitch count is credited with pitches thrown on the day the game started
9. IF A PITCHER IS REPLACED while his team is on defense, the substitute pitcher shall pitch to the batter then at-bat, or any substitute for that-batter, until such batter is put out or reaches first base, or until a third out has been made. To insure that the requirements of this article be fulfilled the umpire will deny any coach defensive player conference which will violate it. EXCEPTION: If a pitcher is incapacitated or guilty of flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct, this rule is ignored.
- a. Any relief pitcher shall be allowed a minimum of ten warm-up pitches regardless of whether or not he becomes the pitcher during or at the beginning of an inning. After the initial ten warm- up pitches, he may also be allowed additional warm-up pitches until such time the umpire believes the player's arm has warmed sufficiently.
 - b. Balk rules shall be in effect for all divisions except the 10U Live/12U Traditional Baseball Division. (NOTE: the balk rules for GRPA divisions are the same as those for game played in accordance with rules adopted by the Georgia High School Association and pitchers should be made aware by team coaches or manager of these balk regulations.)
 - c. Any violation discovered prior to notification would result in the immediate removal of the pitcher from the mound. Any violation occurring after notification will result in the ejection of the player/pitcher and coach from the game. Any subsequent action that occurred while the ineligible pitcher was on the mound (after the legal limit has been reached) prior to the next pitch will be cancelled and reverted back to the finished batter.
 - d. A player who is in the game to pitch, but has no pitching eligibility remaining for that game, may be substituted for even if he/she has warmed up.
 - e. An intentional walked batter will be awarded first base and the pitcher will be charged 4 pitches with no pitches thrown or the balance of pitches to award base.

10. Charged Conferences

- a. Each team when on defense may be granted no more than three conferences during a game without penalty, to permit a coach or his representatives to confer with a defensive player or players, including his pitcher. A request for time for an obviously incapacitated player shall not constitute a charged conference nor shall a conference be charged whenever the pitcher is removed as pitcher. In extra-inning games, a team on defense may have one conference per inning without penalty. **The penalty for using conferences in excess of times listed in (a) above shall be removal of pitcher from the pitching position for the balance of the game.**
- b. The umpire shall deny any subsequent defensive team's request for charged conference in 8U/10U baseball with machines.
- c. Each team, when on offense, may be granted not more than one charged conference per inning to permit the coach or any of that team's members to confer with base runners and/or the batter.

11. In all divisions of GRPA boy's baseball, the curve ball is permitted.

12. In all divisions of GPRA boy's baseball, double headers are permitted. NOTE: The State Athletic

Committee recommends that tournament pairings and game time be considered when it is necessary for an agency host to schedule double-headers. No more than two games per day for a team will be allowed in live pitching tournaments, except for rain delays or extenuating circumstances. **No more than three games per day shall be permitted in pitching machine baseball (except for rain-delayed tournaments).** This decision will be made by the Tournament Director and approved by the State Athletic Committee.

13. 10U and 12U Traditional Division's modified rule for stealing bases:

- a. A modified form of base stealing shall be used in the 12U and both 10U Divisions.
- b. A base runner is required to stay in contact with the base until the pitched ball has reached home plate. At this point in the flight of the pitched ball, the runner is permitted to advance at his own risk of being thrown out.
- c. The runner is automatically called out for leaving the base before the pitched ball reaches home plate. The ball is dead and all subsequent action on the pitch is canceled. All runners must return to base held at time of pitch.
- d. A walk is a live ball situation. Once the pitcher is in control of the ball and on the pitching mound, a runner must advance or return immediately to a base.

14. Three strikes constitute an out, and a batter is not allowed to run if the catcher misses or drops the third strike in the 10U and 12U Traditional Division. Other runners may advance at their own risk of being thrown out.

15. Headfirst slides are **not allowed** by players wearing a facemask. The penalty for a headfirst slide in all divisions of baseball shall be an out if a facemask is worn; C-Flaps can be worn without penalty. A dive back to a base on a pick off or base overrun is not considered a head first slide. Runners in rundown situation may not slide headfirst if wearing a facemask. Any runner is out when he/she does not slide or attempt to avoid the fielder who has the ball in the proximity of the base and is waiting to make a tag or if they maliciously run into a fielder (**give up, get down, go around**). NOTE: For any clarifications, see NFHS rules.

16. In the **12U "Major" Division**, runners can play off the base and are allowed to steal at any point during live play including dropped third strikes.

17. In the 10U Live and 12U Traditional Division, it is illegal for a batter to square to bunt and then draw back his bat and swing away at pitch (contact with ball not required), commonly known as Butcher Rule – Penalty: Out and all runners must return to base occupied at time of pitch. This RULE DOES NOT APPLY TO 12U MAJOR.

18. In the 12U Major, 14U, and 17U divisions, the batter/runner and the defensive player may use the colored or the white section of first base **ONLY** on the occasion of a dropped third strike. *See case book for double first base clarifications (#42, page 200-201).*

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Rubber-molded, cleated shoes are approved for use. Steel spikes are approved for 14U and 17U Divisions. Interchangeable cleated-shoes are allowed using the rubber molded screw-in cleats only. All shoes must be approved by umpire or Tournament Director for safety.
2. The official bat shall be round and made of wood solid one piece, metal, or other material acceptable for batting as approved by rules governing in the GRPA and USA bat rule. Regulation aluminum bats which meet GRPA/USA standards are permitted in all 8U, 10U, and 12U divisions.

- a. In the 8U, 10U, 12U Traditional, and 12U “Major” Divisions, bats must meet USA Baseball bat standards.
3. Approved Bat List: <https://usabat.com/>
4. About USABat: <https://usabat.com/about/> FAQ: <https://usabat.com/faq/>
5. Tee Ball Info: <https://usabat.com/approved-tee-balls/> Visit <https://USABat.com> for detailed information.
6. Look for the USA Baseball logo on the taper of a bat to know it is approved. Approved youth bats are 27” – 32” with barrel diameters up to 2 5/8”. Approved tee ball bats are 26” and shorter.
 - a. Bats for 14U and 17U Baseball Divisions shall conform to National Federation and GHSA guidelines. The diameter at the thickest part shall be 2- 5/8” or less. The length shall be 36” or less. All bats must meet the standards set by The Georgia High School Association and The National Federation of High School Sports. The bat shall not weigh numerically more than 3 ounces less than the length. Bats on NFHS site also must include marking of BB-COR as required and may not be altered. 2 ¼” bats are not allowed in 14U and 17U Divisions.
Example: A 32” long bat cannot be less than 29 ounces in weight.
 - b. There are no weight restrictions for bats in 8U, 10U and 12U divisions as in GHSA.
 - c. If a team is found using an ILLEGAL/ALTERED/NON APPROVED bat prior to player entering batter’s box the equipment shall be removed and play continued. **After player enters batter’s box the coach will be ejected and an out declared.**
7. A slung bat will result in a team warning for the offending team on the first offense. Each additional slung bat for that team will result in the batter being called out. If the same player continues to violate the rule, he can be removed from the game. EXCEPTION: unsportsmanlike conduct.
8. The official ball shall be a sphere formed by yarn wound around a small core of cork, rubber, or similar material and covered with two strips of white horsehide or other authorized material tightly stitched together.
 - a. The only baseballs acceptable for District, Area, and State level competition shall be of the highest quality and meet the current standards set by the GHSA. The following stamped balls are permitted: Little League, Pony League, Official Baseball, Dixie Youth, etc. They do not have to have the NFHS stamp.
 - b. No seconds or blemishes will be allowed in any tournaments.
 - c. A minimum of six premium-grade, regulation-sized baseballs as named above shall be made available for each game in Area and State tournaments.
 - d. Pearl Baseballs are not allowed for use in GRPA district and state tournaments.
9. Regulation home plate, pitcher’s plate, and bases shall be used (the double base is mandatory at first base).
10. Gloves and mitts are governed by GHSA rule. Pitcher’s gloves must be of one color.
11. Catchers must wear full protective equipment, including mask with throat protector, protective helmet (protective cap in 10U and 12U must cover ear), body protector, shin guards, and protective cup in an athletic supporter. The umpire or tournament director shall inspect each catcher’s full protective equipment prior to the game to determine its safety. The helmets must be approved by NOCSAE.
12. All players shall wear protective helmets while batting, running bases, and when on deck. The helmet shall be so designed as to give protection to the temples and the base of the skull as well as to the top of the head.

- a. Face masks are recommended for all age groups. Chin Straps are recommended for all divisions.
- 13. When an umpire orders a batter or runner to wear a head protector in accordance with the GRPA rules, or orders a catcher to wear a head protector, mask with throat protector, protective cup in a supporter, shin guards and/or body protector, the failure by the player to do so shall cause his dismissal from the game.
- 14. For all 8U and 10U pitching machine and coach pitch it is mandatory that the pitcher wear a face mask. It is optional for all other infield players.

15. The person ejected for improper equipment is the head coach and not the player.

SECTION B – UNIFORMS

- 1. A uniform for boy's baseball shall include baseball caps, jerseys numbered on back with six-inch (6") factory type, non-duplicated number, full baseball pants, socks, and shoes. Uniform parts must be identical in style.
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. (*EFFECTIVE January 2025*)
- 2. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment.
 - a. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - b. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach the bases must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other. Only three adults are allowed in the dugout area.
 - c. The batboy shall wear a uniform as required in this rule except that it is not mandatory his uniform be identical in style or color with other team members. Batboy must be in that age group or younger.
- 3. Uniforms as described above are mandatory for all District and State level tournament games.
- 4. Illegal uniforms will be treated as illegal equipment.

SECTION C – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. The following field specifications are required for all games:

Youth Baseball							
Age	Base Distance	Pitching Distance	Mound Requirement		Outfield from Home Plate		Batter's Box
			*Height is above home plate				
			Circle	Height	Min	Max	
8U	60'	46'	10'	6"	175'	225'	4' x 6'
10 U	60'	46'	10'	6"	175'	225'	4' x 6'
12 U Trad.	65'	50'	10'	6"	175'	225'	4' x 6'
12U Major	65'	50'	10'	6"	175'	225'	4' x 6'
14 U	80'	54'	15'	8"	250'	N/A	4' x 6'
17 U	90'	60'6"	18'	10"	300'	N/A	4' x 6'

NOTE: Pitching distances shall be measured from the back point of home plate where the baseline intersects to the nearest edge of the pitcher's plate.

- The batter's box, one on each side of home plate, shall measure 4'x6' for all divisions. The inside lines of the batter's box shall be 6 inches from home plate. The front line of the box shall be three feet in front of a line drawn through the center of home plate. The lines are considered part of the batter's box.
- The coach's box for 14U and 17U Divisions is behind a line 20' long line drawn outside the diamond, parallel to and fifteen feet from the first and third baseline extended from the bases toward home plate. The coach's box for 12U divisions is behind a line six feet long drawn outside the diamond, parallel to and six feet from the first and third baseline extended from the bases toward home plate. Coaches shall remain within the confines of the coach's box except during time-outs and to avoid a fielder making a play.
- The three-foot line is drawn parallel to and three feet from the baselines starting at a point halfway between home plate and first base for all divisions.
- It is recommended that a loudspeaker public address system and scorer's area located favorably to the umpires and conducive to accurate and timely scoring be made available for the game.
- The Agency Host shall be responsible for seeing that the playing field requirements meet GRPA specifications.

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

See calendar for district/state tournament competition on page 24.

SECTION B – STATE

All ages will start on Tuesday and play through Saturday.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – GAME PARTICIPANTS AND OFFICIALS

1. A boy's baseball team shall consist of nine players or ten/eleven if using two extra players, whose position shall be designated for the scorer as pitcher, catcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, short stop, left fielder, center fielder, right fielder, or extra players (if used). A team's line-up and batting order are official when handed to the umpire at the start of the game. Substitutions are not required to be listed.
2. The use of two adults as coaches are permitted in coach's boxes provided that both are attired in accordance with GRPA boy's baseball uniform regulations.
3. All team members not actually participating in the game to include coaches and managers must stay within the confines of the dugout or dugout area except to coach the bases from the coach's box or to talk with players during a charged conference.
4. A minimum of two registered officials must be used in district level games.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS**SECTION A – PROTEST AND APPEALS FOR BASEBALL RULES INFRACTION**

1. A judgment decision by an umpire on any play shall not be protested.
2. Protests on misinterpretation of the rules are allowed to the Umpire in Chief and if acceptable as valid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any such protest and shall serve as the odd-numbered member of the tournament protest committee as determined prior to the game by the Agency Host in coordination with the District Commissioner for District level competition and with the State Athletic Committee Chair for State levels of competition. There is a \$50.00 protest fee. If a protest is accepted by the Tournament Director, it must be made by the team manager or responsible person in charge of the team at the time of the alleged infraction. A full explanation of the protest will be recorded by the official scorer and retained in the official scorebook for reference. All such protests are to be immediately acted upon by the protest committee and before play is continued. If the decision of the protest committee is appealed to the State Athletic Committee it must be done so in time for any action to be resolved prior to the next game of either team involved.
3. No protest on rules interpretation will be accepted after play continues following an alleged infraction.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

8U AND 10U PITCHING MACHINE BASEBALL RULES

1. All pitching will be done by an electric powered pitching machine. No two-wheel machines are allowed. The machine must be a minimum of 24" off the ground with a maximum of 36" from the bottom of the wheel. In the employment of the electric-powered pitching machine, machine height is important. If mounted on top of a mound, the legs shall be used which lowers the point of ball delivery to a normal height for the average player in this age group. If mounted on flat ground, the longer legs will be employed, again elevating the machine to the normal pitching height.
 - a. The pitching machine wheel delivery point should be placed at the pitching distance set for each age group.
2. All rules governing 10U baseball in GRPA athletics will be in effect with the exception of the following:
 - a. Ball speed shall be approximately 46 miles per hour for 10U, and 40 miles per hour for 8U.
 - b. A qualified official will be stationed behind the catcher to call balls and strikes. The second official will be stationed behind the machine to feed the machine and act as base umpire.

Machine officials will be responsible for any adjustments to the machine and will present the ball to each batter prior to feeding the machine.

- c. When a batted ball hits a pitching machine, the umpire feeding the machine, or the extension cord off the ground, it is considered a “DEAD BALL SINGLE” and batter/runner will be awarded first base with all runners moving forward if forced. If a batted ball hits a defensive player then hits the machine, the batter is awarded first base and all other runners move up one base, if forced. Ball is dead when ball hits machine.
 - d. When a thrown ball hits the pitching machine or the extension cord off the ground, it is considered a “DEAD BALL” and played as if thrown out of bounds.
 - e. An 8’ deep by 12’ wide rectangle box centered on the pitching plate in which the player in the pitching position must remain until the pitch is delivered. Defensive player must have at least one foot inside the box at the time of the pitch.
 - f. A line shall be drawn in the infield at the same distance as the pitching distance. No infielder is allowed **in front of the restrictive line until after** the ball is delivered through the machine, outfielders remain in outfield grass area (**behind a 60’ radius from the front edge of pitchers rubber**), and the pitcher must remain in the box. **Penalty: The penalty for violation of this rule is a delayed dead ball and the batting team having the choice of the result of the play or no pitch will be declared. A team warning will be issued on the 2nd offense, 3rd offense head coach ejected.**
 - g. Count remains 3 and 2 until ball is hit or a strike out occurs except each player may be intentionally walked once per game. No player may be walked any more than once per game.
 - h. Bunting is not allowed in the 8U machine pitch division. **Fake bunts are not allowed. If a batter shows bunt, an out will be called.**
3. Bunting is allowed in 10U machine pitch. **A fake bunt is when you pretend to bunt the ball and you get in bunting position, once the ball is released you pull the bat back and attempt to hit the ball.**
- a. **Stealing is not allowed in the 8U or 10U division.**
4. In 8U and 10U Division with pitching machine, a maximum four outfielders shall be used. Ten players will be used on defense at the following positions: Catcher, Pitcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, short stop, and four outfielders. In pitching machine and coach-pitch there must always be players in the pitcher and catcher roles. If playing shorthand, the player must come from the in-field or outfield. The team must have a battery. The batting order will consist of these ten players. Additionally, one or two EP’s can be utilized.
- a. No defensive coaches allowed on the field in 8U or 10U pitching machine.
5. The infield fly rule is in effect for 10U ONLY division.
6. In 10U pitching machine ONLY, a runner cannot run on a drop 3rd strike.
7. A courtesy runner may be used for the catcher only. The courtesy runner must be anyone not in the current batting order or the last batted out if no substitutions are available.
8. When all play has ceased, the umpire will call “time” and all play will be stopped.

10U LIVE PITCH BASEBALL SPECIAL RULES

1. The infield fly rule is in effect.
2. Courtesy runners may be used for pitcher and catcher and must be anyone not in the current batting order or the last batted out if no substitutions are available. It cannot be the same person for both positions.
3. You may steal after pitch reaches home plate; penalty for leaving too soon is OUT.
4. Nine defensive players will be used.
5. Two EP's (Extra Players) may be used batting either ten or eleven.
6. In the 10U Live Division, it is illegal for a batter to square to bunt and then draw back his bat and swing away at pitch (contact with ball not required), commonly known as Butcher Rule-Penalty Out and all runners must return to base occupied at time of pitch.

8U COACH PITCH BASEBALL SPECIAL RULES

Pitching Rules

1. An offensive coach will pitch to his/her own team.
2. The coach may only coach the batter until he/she reaches first base or after he/she leaves third base. (Penalty: The coach will be replaced after the second occurrence for the remainder of the game)
3. The pitcher must pitch from the 30ft pitching mark..
4. Pitcher may not cross the foul arc or enter the pitching circle (while pitching)
5. Pitcher must keep one foot on or straddle the pitching line.
6. Pitcher must pitch over-handed. (Any batted ball that hits the pitching coach will be a dead ball and called no pitch).
7. If the pitching coach intentionally allows the ball to hit him. (Penalty: batter is out - Umpire's Judgment). No runner may advance.
8. The offensive coach (pitcher) must attempt to avoid interference and try to pick-up the batter's bat provided he/she does not interfere with the play.
9. If the offensive coach (pitcher) does not attempt to get off the field and/or interferes with the defensive player to keep him from making a play will result in the batter being called out. No runner will advance.
10. The player in the pitching position on defense shall wear a mask for safety reasons.

Offense

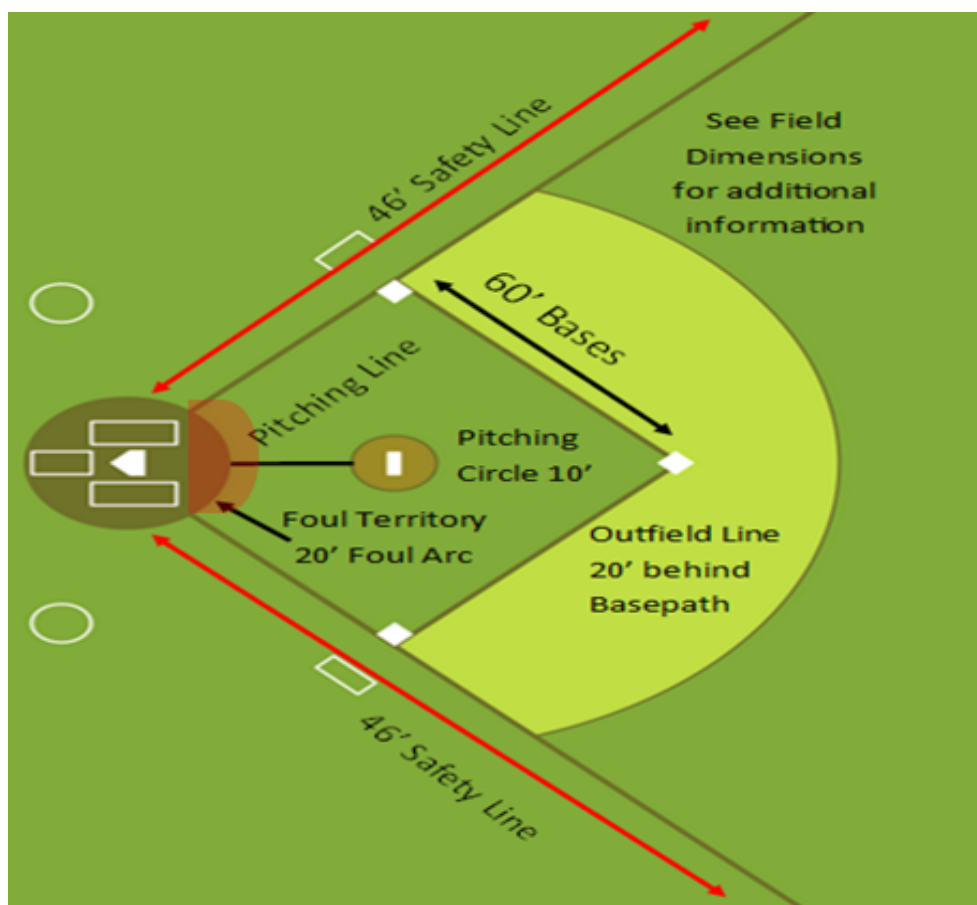
1. After one warning per game, per player for slinging her/his bat, the batter will be out, a dead ball called, and no runner advance.
2. Batter will receive five pitches before being declared out.
3. Batter will be called out on three swinging strikes.
4. If fifth pitch is fouled, he may continue to bat.
5. If fifth pitch is fouled and caught, it is an out.
6. No bunting allowed. If batter squares to bunt and then swings, he will be called out; this will be umpire's judgment.
7. Any base runner leaving the base before the ball reaches home plate is out. (Penalty: The ball is

dead and all other runners return to base occupied prior to pitch – Umpire's judgment.) The pitch will not count.

8. Bat boys/girls will not be allowed in this Division.
9. No offensive coaches in the playing field.

Defense

1. No rolling the ball intentionally will be allowed.
2. The infield fly rule will not be in effect.
3. Only ten players on the field: six infielders (including pitcher & catcher) and four outfielders. In pitching machine and coach-pitch there must always be players in the pitcher and catcher roles. If playing shorthand, the player must come from the in-field or outfield. The team must have a battery.
4. The defensive player listed as a pitcher will stay in the ten foot circle until the ball is hit. The player/pitcher may have one foot outside the circle. (Penalty: Offense gets choice of the play or no pitch).
5. Play shall not be stopped by the defensive team heading off or stopping the front runner. Trailing runners may advance at their own risk.
6. If a player is injured by being hit with a batted or thrown ball, time out will be called immediately. Bases will be awarded/outs will be called at the umpire's discretion based on each individual situation.
7. No defensive coaches allowed on the field.



**RULE
YOUTH**

**VIII (A) –
AND ADULT**

SLOW PITCH SOFTBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

- There are nine divisions for slow pitch softball; six youth and three adult. Age control date is on June 30, current year for youth and September 1, current year for adult..

<u>YOUTH (Girls only)</u>	<u>ADULT (Ages 18 & Over)</u>
8 & Under Machine Pitch	Men's Open Equalizer
10 & Under	Men's Church Equalizer
10 & Under Machine Pitch	Co-Ed Equalizer
12 & Under	
14 & Under	
17 & Under	

- For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions:
 - Home County or Agency has no program.
 - Cannot cross district lines.
 - Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - Host agency must endorse participant.
 - Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
- There shall be two classifications in youth competition: A/ B and C
- Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, HIGHER GROUND, DOYLE, MVP, or USA SOFTBALL ACE.
- Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

- Official USA Softball Slow Pitch Softball Rules (for use in all championship games of USA Softball) printed in the current edition of the Official Guide for National USA Softball is accepted guide for GRPA games, with the exceptions found in this manual.
 - For Co-Ed USA Softball Class “A”: rules for Co-Ed shall be adhered to except there will be no ejection for hitting more than two homeruns. Outs will be called.
- Tournaments for adult softball shall be played by the one pitch method in District and State tournaments if the tourney is delayed for an inordinate length of time. The tournament director shall use

this only in cases where tournaments may be hampered from finishing on Sunday.

3. No adult church games will be played on Sunday, except under extenuating circumstances.
4. Courtesy Runners
 - a. At any time, the team at-bat may use courtesy runners for the pitcher and/or the catcher. The same runner may not be used for both positions. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances.
 - b. The courtesy runner can be anyone not in the current batting order.
 - c. A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher and then be used as a substitute for another player in the half inning. If no subs are available then the last batted out is to be utilized as the courtesy runner.
 - d. In 10U with machine and in 8U, no courtesy runner for the pitcher is allowed.
 - e. Courtesy runners may be used in 50 and older, 40 and older divisions only per USA Softball rules.
5. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
6. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
7. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

Division	Innings	Time*
8U, 10U, 12U	6	1 hour and 30 minutes
14U, 17U	7	1 hour and 30 minutes
Adults	7	1 hour

**Time Limit Exception – Championship & “if” games.*

1. A game which is tied after regulation play of seven innings shall continue until a winner is determined.
2. The score of a forfeiture game shall be recorded as 7-0.
3. All GRPA district and state level tournament games must be played to conclusion. (EXAMPLE: Game starts on Monday and is rained out in the second inning. From the exact point the game was delayed or postponed, it shall resume at the next playable opportunity regardless of length of delay or postponement.
4. State Tournaments in softball shall be double-elimination, and it is recommended that district level tournaments also be double elimination.
5. A game shall be considered complete after five innings with ten runs, four innings with fifteen runs, or three innings with twenty runs ahead including championship game and the if-needed championship game. The run rule will apply at all times in youth and adult games.
6. Equalizer/One Home Run Ahead Rule: A team cannot at any time be ahead in home runs by more than one. The first team to hit a ball fair over the outfield fence cannot hit another one until the other team hits one to tie or one more to go ahead by one homerun. Any ball hit in excess is an out. (Clarification

- home team may go up one home run in their last at bat).

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

1. **Adult:** One extra player (EP) on regular teams or two extra players (EPs) (one male and one female in Co-Ed) may be used. All players, eleven or twelve, must bat and any ten can play defense. Defensive positions may change, but not the batting order. Co-Ed teams must still abide by male- female alignment rules. Extra players are optional before each game if placed in starting lineup.
2. **Youth:** Extra Players (EP) - A maximum of 2 EP's can be used at all levels of GRPA softball. **No flex allowed.**
3. In slow pitch (10 players) and slow pitch with an extra player (11 players), a team may start and/or continue a game with one less player, whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection. The player who has left the game under this exception cannot return to the line-up. (Exception not used in Co-Ed.) A player on the team bench that has participated in the game may re- enter the game to replace an injured player in any spot in the batting order to avoid forfeit. An ejected player **CANNOT** re-enter.
4. **SHORTHANDED RULE**
 - a. **To start a game:**
 - i. a game may begin or finish with one less than required to start.
 - ii. The vacant position must be listed last in the batting order.
 - iii. An out will be recorded when the vacant position in the batting order is scheduled to bat.
 - iv. (Co-ed Slow Pitch) If a team plays shorthanded with either three players in the infield or outfield, at least one must be male and at least one must be a female.
 - b. **To continue a game** once started with a full team listed on the line-up card:
 - i. If a team begins play with the required number of players as listed, that team may continue a game with one less player than is currently in the batting order whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection. Under no circumstances shall a team be permitted to bat:
 1. less than 8 in Live Arm.
 2. less than 9 in Machine/Coach pitch.
 3. less than 10 in slow pitch when using an EP.
 4. less than 11 in slow pitch when using two EP's.
 - ii. If playing shorthanded and a substitute arrives, the substitute must be inserted immediately into the vacant spot. If the substitute refuses to enter for any reason that player becomes ineligible for the remainder of the game.
 - iii. (Co-ed) If another player of the correct gender arrives, that player must be inserted into the line-up in the vacant spot by alternating genders
 - iv. If the player leaving the game is a runner or batter, the runner or batter shall be declared out
 - v. When the player who has left the game is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat. An inning or the game can end with an automatic out. The player who has left the game cannot return to the line-up.

- (Co-ed) The batting order must still alternate and the defensive positioning remains as required.

EXCEPTION: A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return even after missing a turn at bat.

EFFECT: Failure to have the required number of eligible players to start or continue a game will result in a forfeit.

5. The manager, coach, or captain of a team making a substitution must immediately notify the plate umpire who will suspend play and announce the change. Substitutes do not have to be listed on line-up card.
6. The choice of first or last at-bat (home – visitors designation) shall be determined immediately prior to a tournament game by a coin toss supervised by the Tournament Director or his/her representative, except championship game is(a) below.
 - a. In the Championship Game, the undefeated team will have the choice of home or visitor. In The “IF” game, home or visitor will be determined by coin toss.
7. During the school year, youth cannot start a new game after 10:00 PM on weekdays. All games will be scheduled to start no later than 10:00 PM on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights but may be played in emergency situations (rain, game delays, etc.).
8. The third-strike foul is not an out in 10U and 12U competition but is an out in 14U and 17U.
9. In the 12U Major, 14U, and 17U divisions, the batter/runner and the defensive player may use the colored or the white section of first base **ONLY** on the occasion of a dropped third strike. *See case book for double first base clarifications (#42, page 200-201).*
10. Courtesy runners may be used in 50 and older, 40 and older divisions only per USA Softball rules.
11. Adult tournaments, except church divisions, are to be played on Saturday & Sunday.
12. Adult Church League games will be played on Friday & Saturday and cannot start prior to 7:00 pm on Fridays
13. Adult softball teams are allowed to utilize the USA Softball pick-up player rule to add up to three (3) players when advancing to a state tournament. This can only be done if there is room on the original roster to add the names.
14. All Adult Slow Pitch batters assume a 1-1 count when they step in batter’s box per USA Softball NGB rules.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Shoes are mandatory for play in all softball games.
 - a. Rubber-molded, cleated shoes are approved for use. Steel spikes are EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED and shall be treated as illegal equipment. All other shoes must meet USA Softball Rule Book standards.
 - b. Smooth and soft-soled athletic shoes including tennis or basketball shoes are acceptable
2. Softballs for GRPA competition shall be .44 COR with compression rating of 375 maximum. **Per USA Softball RULES, the 52/300 12” ball will be used and the 44/375 ball has been removed from Slow- Pitch Play.**

3. Regulation home plate, pitcher's plate, and bases shall be used for all girls' divisions.
4. Helmets must be worn by batters, base-runners, and on-deck participants in youth softball. Chin straps are recommended.
5. For all 10U pitching machine and coach pitch it is mandatory that the pitcher wear a face mask. It is optional for all other infield players.
6. All Youth catchers must wear mask with throat protector. The helmet must cover the ears and back of the head. Option: Wearing a chest protector is optional. Catcher's helmet and mask shall be required for 14U and 17U to include throat protection according to GHSA regulations
7. The double base is mandatory for use at first base in youth divisions and approved for adult play.
8. All USA Softball approved bats shall be allowed in GRPA Competition. Check www.usasoftball.com for updated list of legal bats. **Mandatory bat testing is required for all GRPA Adult Softball Divisions. Bats not found in compliance will be tagged and removed. If bat returns to play, it will be considered illegal equipment.**
 - a. If a team is found using an ILLEGAL/ALTERED/NON APPROVED bat prior to player entering batter's box the equipment shall be removed and play continued. **After player enters batter's box the coach will be ejected and an out declared.**
9. A slung bat will result in a team warning for the offending team on the first offense. Each additional slung bat for that team will result in the batter being called out. If the same player continues to violate the rule, he can be removed from the game. EXCEPTION: unsportsmanlike conduct.
10. 12" Balls will be used in Co-Ed Softball.
11. In youth softball, no head first sliding is allowed by runner with facemask attached to helmet. Penalty: Runners will be called out.
12. Stealing is allowed per USA Softball guidelines.
13. **The person ejected for improper equipment is the head coach and not the player.**

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Team uniforms for softball will consist of matching or like colored jerseys with a factory-type non-duplicating number on the back at least six inches in height. It is strongly recommended that all team personnel be attired alike. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment.
 - Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. ***(EFFECTIVE January 2025)***
2. Team caps are not mandatory and furthermore, if caps are worn they do not have to be matching. If caps or visors are worn, they must be baseball/softball style caps with no vulgar or obscene words or graphics allowed. No plastic visors are allowed in softball. Tournament Director will make the final decision.
3. Shorts are acceptable. It is recommended, but not required, that all players on a team wear the same color shorts. GRPA does not adhere to USA Softball pants/sliding pants rule.
4. Illegal uniforms will be treated as illegal equipment.
5. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee

members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.

6. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are alike in style and color with each other.
7. Only three adults are allowed in the dugout area.
8. The bat boy shall wear a uniform as required in this rule except that it is not mandatory that his/her uniform be identical in style or color with the team. Bat boy must be in that age group or younger. They must also wear a batting helmet.

SECTION C – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. The following field specifications are required for all games:
 - a. Girls' Division

Girls Slow Pitch Softball							
Age	Base Distance	Pitching Distance	Mound Requirement		Outfield from Home Plate		Batter's Box
			*Height is above home plate				
			Circle	Height	Min	Max	
8U Girls							4x6
10 U Girls	60	40'			175'		
12 U Girls	60'	46'			175'		
14 U	65'				225'		
17 U	65'	50'			225'		

- b. Adult/Coed Divisions

Adult/Coed Slow Pitch Softball							
Age	Base Distance	Pitching Distance	Mound Requirement		Outfield from Home Plate		Batter's Box
			*Height is above home plate				
			Circle	Height	Min	Max	
Men	70'	50'			300'		
Women	70'	50'			265'		
Coed	70'	50'			300'		

2. In all co-ed divisions, there will be a 200' line in the outfield that the outfielders must remain behind until the female batter makes contact with the ball. The penalty for outfielders being over the line will be that all base runners advanced forward one base and the batter awarded first base.
3. The batter's box, coaches' boxes and 3' line halfway from home plate to first base shall be in accordance with current USA Softball rules.

4. It is required that a loud-speaker public address system and scorers' area located favorably to the umpires and conducive to accurate and timely scoring be made available for the game.

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

1. District level competition in girls' softball is to be completed as follows:
 - a. 10U, 12U, 14U, and 17U Divisions district levels are to be completed by the Saturday before the State Tournament.
 - b. District level competition in all divisions of adult softball is to be completed by the Saturday before the State Tournament.

SECTION B – STATE

1. **Procedure:** In the event a state tournament cannot be completed within the scheduled time frame and more than 40 percent of the scheduled games have been completed, the following procedures may be used to break ties among teams in the same spot in the bracket. The tournament may be extended by the Tournament Director after conferring with the State Athletic Committee Chairman.
 - a. The team which advanced the farthest in the winner's bracket.
 - b. Win-lose records, except among undefeated teams.
 - c. If only two teams are tied for a position and have played each other, the winner of that game.
2. **EXCEPTION:** If Championship must be played or the teams shall be declared co-champions
 - a. The teams shall be ranked according to the fewest runs allowed per game played.
 - b. If a tie still exists, the team shall be ranked according to the most runs scored per game played.
 - c. If a tie still exists, by a coin toss.
3. No team may play more than 3 games in a day except under extenuating circumstances. (weather, power failure, etc.)

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – GAME OFFICIALS

A minimum of two registered USA Softball or GHSA game officials that are a member of an approved association in USA Softball or GHSA and of a chartered USA Softball or GHSA Umpires Association must be used in District and State play.

SECTION B – PLAYERS AND OTHER TEAM MEMBERS

1. The judgment decision by an umpire on any play shall not be protested.
2. Protests on misinterpretations of the rules are allowed to the Umpire-in-Chief and if accepted as valid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any such protest and shall serve as the odd-numbered member of the Tournament Protest Committee as determined prior to the game by the Agency Host in coordination with the District Commissioner for District level competition and with the State Athletic Committee Chair for State levels of competition. If a protest is accepted by the Tournament Director, it must be made by the certified coach or responsible person in charge of the team at the time of the alleged infraction. A full explanation of the protest will be recorded by the official scorer and retained in the official scorebook for reference. All such protests are to be immediately acted upon by the Protest Committee and before play is continued. If the decision of the Protest Committee is appealed to the State Athletic Committee, it must be done so in time for any action to be resolved prior to the next game of either team involved.
3. No protest on rules interpretation will be accepted after the next legal or illegal pitch.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

8U AND 10U PITCHING MACHINE SOFTBALL RULES

All rules governing 8U and 10U in GRPA athletics will be in effect with exceptions of the following:

1. All pitching will be done by an electrically powered pitching machine using an underhanded delivery 35' to 40' over the top. The pitching machine wheel delivery point should be placed at the pitching distance set for each age group.
2. The arch of the pitch shall be adjusted by the umpire in charge to be no lower than six feet and no higher than ten feet. The judgment of these heights shall be left to the discretion of the umpires with the final authority being the Tournament Director. If a Jugs Jr. machine is used, the ball should be placed in the machine from the top.
3. Qualified officials will be stationed behind home plate and behind the pitching machine. Officials behind the machine will feed the machine and act as base umpire. Machine umpires will be responsible for any adjustments and for presenting the ball to each batter prior to feeding the machine.
4. When a batted ball hits a pitching machine, the umpire feeding the machine, or the extension cord off the ground, it is considered a "DEAD BALL SINGLE" and batter/runner will be awarded first base with all runners moving forward if forced. If a batted ball hits a defensive player then hits the machine, the batter is awarded first base and all other runners move up one base, if forced. Ball is dead when ball hits machine. When a thrown ball hits the pitching machine or the extension cord off the ground, it is considered a "DEAD BALL" and played as if thrown out of bounds.
 - a. In 10U pitching machine ONLY, a runner cannot run on a drop 3rd strike.
 - b. No stealing allowed in 10U pitching machine.
13. An 8' deep by 12' wide rectangle box centered on the pitching plate in which the player in the pitching position must remain until the pitch is delivered. Defensive player must have at least one foot inside the box at time of the pitch.
14. Players in pitchers position must be within 6' of the pitching plate but never any closer than 40' of home plate when the pitch is delivered. *A half circle shall be drawn at the pitching machine for the infielder to start prior to a pitch.*
15. No base on balls allowed. Count remains 3 and 2 until ball is hit or a strikeout occurs.
16. Players will be eligible for only one 10U and 8U softball division.
17. Ten defensive players shall be used in accordance with the following positions: one each for catcher, pitcher, first base, second base, third base, and short stop; and four outfielders. It is mandatory that the pitcher wear a face mask. In pitching machine and coach-pitch there must always be players in the pitcher and catcher roles. If playing shorthand, the player must come from the in-field or outfield. The team must have a battery.
 - a. No defensive coaches allowed on the field in 8U or 10U pitching machine.
18. The extra players may be used in accordance to USA Softball rules.
19. A one hour and thirty-minute time limit will be used in all games except for the championship and if games.
20. When all play has ceased, the umpire will call "time" and all play will be stopped

RULE VIII (B) – YOUTH FAST PITCH SOFTBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISION

1. There are six divisions for fast pitch softball. Participants must be 6 by the age control date: on June 30 of current year. The Age Divisions are as follows:
 - a. 8 & Under Machine Pitch
 - b. 8 & Under Coach Pitch
 - c. 10 & Under
 - d. 10 & Under Machine Pitch
 - e. 12 & Under
 - f. 14 & Under
 - g. 17 & Under
2. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
3. There shall be two classifications in youth competition: A/ B and C
4. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, HIGHER GROUND, DOYLE, MVP, or USA SOFTBALL ACE.
5. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. Official USA Softball Fast Pitch Softball Rules (for use in all championship games of USASoftball) printed in the current edition of the Official Guide for National USA Softball is accepted guide for GRPA games with the exceptions found in this manual.
 - a. The use of National Federation and current GHSA rules and regulations for pitching requirements pertaining to only having to have the pivot foot (one foot) in contact with the pitching plate is allowed.
2. Courtesy Runners
 - a. At any time, the team at-bat may use courtesy runners for the pitcher and/or the catcher.

The same runner may not be used for both positions. Neither the pitcher nor the catcher will be required to leave the game under such circumstances.

- b. The courtesy runner must be anyone not currently in the batting order. It cannot be the same person for both. If no subs are available then the last batted out is to be utilized as the courtesy runner.
 - c. A player may not run as a courtesy runner for the pitcher or the catcher and then be used as a substitute for another player in the half inning.
 - d. In 10U with machine and in 8U, no courtesy runner for the pitcher is allowed.
 - e. Extra Players (EP) – A maximum of 2 EP's can be used at all levels of GRPA softball. **No flex allowed.**
3. **DROPPED THIRD STRIKE INTERPRETATION:** Become batter/runner, when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground and there are fewer than two outs and first base is not occupied at the time of the pitch, or any time there are two outs. USA/ASA Rule 8; Section 18.
 4. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
 5. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
 6. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

1. A regulation game shall consist of:

Division	Innings	Time*
8U 10U 12U	6	one hour thirty minutes (1:30)
8U Machine Pitch 10U Machine Pitch	6	one hour thirty minutes (1:30)
14U 17U	7	one hour thirty minutes (1:30)

Game clock shall start at the first pitch of the game.

**Time Limit Exception – Championship & “if” games.*

2. International Tie-breaker: After the regulation game or time limit has expired, the International tie-breaker will be used. The last scheduled batter will be placed on second base. This will continue until a winner is determined. Refer to USA Softball rule 5, Section 11
3. The score of a forfeiture game shall be recorded as 7-0.
4. All GRPA district and state level tournament games must be played to conclusion. (EXAMPLE: Game starts on Monday and is rained out in the second inning – game resumes at the next playable opportunity regardless of length of delay or postponement from the exact point that the game was

delayed or postponed.)

5. State Tournaments in softball shall be double-elimination, and it is recommended that district level tournaments also be double-elimination.
6. A game shall be considered complete after five innings with eight runs, four innings with twelve runs, three innings with fifteen runs or two innings with twenty runs ahead including championship game and the if-needed championship game. The run rule will apply at all times.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

1. SHORTHANDED RULE

a. To start a game:

- i. a game may begin or finish with one less than required to start.
- ii. The vacant position must be listed last in the batting order.
- iii. An out will be recorded when the vacant position in the batting order is scheduled to bat.

b. *To continue a game* once started with a full team listed on the line-up card:

- i. If a team begins play with the required number of players as listed, that team may continue a game with one less player than is currently in the batting order whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection. Under no circumstances shall a team be permitted to bat:
 1. less than 8 in fast pitch live arm
 2. less than 9 in machine/coach pitch.
 3. less than 10 in fast pitch when using two EP's.
- ii. If playing shorthanded and a substitute arrives, the substitute must be inserted immediately into the vacant spot. If the substitute refuses to enter for any reason that player becomes ineligible for the remainder of the game.
- iii. If the player leaving the game is a runner or batter, the runner or batter shall be declared out.
- iv. When the player who has left the game is scheduled to bat, an out shall be declared for each turn at bat. An inning or the game can end with an automatic out. The player who has left the game cannot return to the line-up.
 EXCEPTION: A player who has left the game under the blood rule may return even after missing a turn at bat.
 EFFECT: Failure to have the required number of eligible players to start or continue a game will result in a forfeit.

2. A team can start and/or continue a game with eight players, whenever a player leaves the game for any reason other than ejection. In addition, whenever the player who has left the game under this exception cannot return to the line-up (exception not used in co-ed). A player on the team bench that has participated in the game may enter the game to replace an injured player in any spot in batting order when all players have played. No player removed by an umpire from the game because of injury or ejection may re-enter.
3. A substitute removed may re-enter as a **legal** substitute for an injured player only if all other players have played when the team is reduced to less than 8 players (less than 9 players for pitching machine division).

4. The manager, coach or captain of a team making a substitution must immediately notify the plate umpire who will suspend play and announce the change. Substitutes do not have to be listed on line-up card.
5. The choice of first or last at-bat (home – visitors designation) shall be determined immediately prior to a tournament game by a coin toss supervised by the Tournament Director or his/her representative, except championship game is(a) below.
 - a. In the Championship Game, the undefeated team will have the choice of home or visitor. In the “IF” game, home or visitor will be determined by coin toss.
6. During the school year, youth cannot start a new game after 10:00 PM on weekdays. All games will be scheduled to start no later than 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday nights but may be played in emergency situations (rain, delay of game, etc.).
7. A maximum of 2 EP’s (Extra Players) will be allowed in GRPA softball.
8. No team may play more than 3 games in a day except under extenuating circumstances. (weather, power failure, etc.)
9. A starter and a substitute will be allowed to re-enter one time during a game.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Rubber-molded, cleated shoes are approved for use in 8U, 10U, and 12U divisions. Steel spikes are EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED and shall be treated as illegal equipment in the 8U, 10U and 12U divisions. **Steel cleats are allowed in the 14U and 17U divisions of fast-pitch softball.** All other shoes must meet USA Softball Rule Book Standards. Smooth and soft-soled athletic shoes including tennis or basketball shoes are acceptable.
2. A minimum of three new USA Softball approved softballs must be available for each game. The official ball shall be that as permitted for play in USA Softball. 12U and up will hit 12” softballs, and 10U youth will hit 11” softballs core .47 Optic Yellow ball. **Must comply with USA Softball Rule 3 – Equipment, Official Softball.** Allow USA Softball and/or GHSA approved ball and it must be Optic yellow with raised seam .47 cor. (375 maximum) and can have a synthetic cover. The 8U and 10U with machine ball may be smooth seam.
3. Regulation home plate, pitcher’s plate, and bases shall be used for all girls’ divisions.
4. Gloves or mitts may be worn by any player as long as the glove or mitt meets National Federation Standards.
5. Helmets with face mask must be worn by batters, base-runners, and on deck participants in youth softball. No player can play without a face mask. The penalty will be treated as illegal equipment. Chinstraps are recommended. No head first sliding is allowed. A dive back to a base is not considered a slide.
6. For all 8U and 10U pitching machine and coach pitch it is mandatory that the pitcher wear a face mask. It is optional for all other infield players.
7. Youth catchers must wear mask with throat protectors and a catcher’s helmet with ear flaps or a batting helmet with a wire face guard and throat protector. (The helmets must cover the ears and back of the head. (Wearing a chest protector and shin guards is MANDATORY.)
8. The double base is mandatory for first base. In the 12U, 14U, and 17U divisions, the batter/runner and the defensive player may use the colored or the white section of first base **ONLY** on the occasion of a dropped third strike. *See case book for double first base clarifications (#43, page 201).*

9. Check www.usasoftball.com for complete and up-to-date list of legal bats.
 - a. If a team is found using an **ILLEGAL/ALTERED/NON APPROVED** bat prior to player entering batter's box the equipment shall be removed and play continued. **After player enters batter's box the coach will be ejected and an out declared.**
10. A slung bat will result in a team warning for the offending team on the first offense. Each additional slung bat for that team will result in the batter being called out. If the same player continues to violate the rule, he can be removed from the game. **EXCEPTION:** unsportsmanlike conduct.
- 11. The person ejected for improper equipment is the head coach and not the player.**

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Team uniforms for softball will consist of matching or like-colored jerseys with a factory-type non-duplicating number on the back at least six inches in height. It is strongly recommended that all team personnel be attired alike. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc., do not have to match if the basic color is the same. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment.
 - Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. **(EFFECTIVE January 2025)**
2. Team caps are not mandatory. If caps or visors are worn, they must be baseball/softball style caps with no vulgar or obscene words or graphics will be allowed. Tournament Director will make final decision. Caps do not have to match.
3. Shorts are acceptable. It is recommended, but not required, that all players on a team wear the same color shorts. GRPA does not adhere to USA Softball pants/sliding pants rule.
4. Illegal uniforms will be treated as illegal equipment.
5. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.
6. The bat boy/girl shall wear a uniform as required in this rule except that is it not mandatory that his/her uniform be identical in style or color with the team. Bat boy/girl must be in that age group or younger. They must wear batting helmets.

SECTION C – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. The following field specifications are required for all games:

Youth FastPitch Softball						
Age	Base Distance	Pitching Distance	Safety Line	Outfield from Home Plate		Batter's Box
				Min	Max	
8U	60'	40'	40'			4' x 6'
8U Coach Pitch	60'		46'			
10 U Machine	60'	40'	40'	150'	225'	3' x 7
10 U Live	60'	35'	N/A	150'	225'	3' x 7
12 U	60'	40'	N/A	175'	225'	3' x 7
14 U	60'	43'	N/A	200'	225'	3' x 7
17 U	60'	43'	N/A	200'	225'	3' x 7

2. The batter's box, coach's boxes, and three-foot line halfway from home plate to first base shall be in accordance with current USA Softball rules.
3. It is required that a loud-speaker public announcement system and scorer's area located favorably to the umpires and conducive to accurate and timely scoring be made available for the game.
4. The Agency Host shall be responsible for seeing that the playing field requirements meet GRPA specifications.

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

1. A minimum of two registered USA Softball or GHSA officials must be used in district level games.
2. District level competition in girls' softball is to be completed as follows:
 - a. 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U, and 17U Divisions district levels completed a minimum of 10 days prior to the State Tournament.

SECTION B – STAFF

1. **Procedure:** In the event a state tournament cannot be completed within the scheduled time frame and more than 40 percent of the scheduled games have been completed, the following procedures may be used to break ties among teams in the same spot in the bracket. The tournament may be extended by the tournament director after conferring with the State Athletic Committee Chairman.
 - a. The team which advanced the farthest in the winner's bracket.

- b. Win-lose records, except among undefeated teams.
- c. If only two teams are tied for a position and have played each other, the winner of the game will be declared champion. EXCEPTION: If Championship is not played and teams did not play each other in tournament, then they shall be declared co-champions.
- d. The teams shall be ranked according to the fewest runs allowed per game played.
- e. If a tie still exists, the team shall be ranked according to the most runs scored per game played.
- f. If a tie still exists, by a coin toss.
- g. There shall be no mound on the field for State Tournaments.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – GAME OFFICIALS, PLAYERS, AND OTHER TEAM MEMBERS

- 1. A minimum of two registered USA Softball or GHSA game officials that are a member of an approved association in USA Softball or GHSA and of a chartered USA Softball or GHSA Umpires Association must be used in District and State play.
- 2. All team members not actually participating in the game, to include coaches and manager, must stay within the confines of the dugout or dugout area except to coach the bases from the coach's box or talk with players during a called time.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

SECTION A – PROTESTS FOR SOFTBALL RULES INFRACTIONS

- 1. The judgment decision by an umpire on any play shall not be protested.
 - 2. Protests on misinterpretation of the rules are allowed to the Umpire-in-Chief and if accepted as valid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any such protest and shall serve as the odd-numbered member of the tournament protest committee as determined prior to the game by the Agency Host in coordination with the District Commissioner for District level competition and with the State Athletic Committee Chair for State Levels of competition. If a protest is accepted by the Tournament Director, it must be made by the certified coach or responsible person in charge of the team at the time of the alleged infraction. A full explanation of the protest will be recorded by the official scorer and retained in the official scorebook for reference. All such protests are to be immediately acted upon by the Protest Committee and before play is continued. If the decision of the Protest Committee is appealed to the State Athletic Committee, it must be done so in time for any action to be resolved prior to the next game of either team involved.
 - 3. No protest on rules interpretation will be accepted after the next pitch (legal or illegal).
- For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

8U AND 10U PITCHING MACHINE FAST PITCH SOFTBALL RULES

All rules governing 8U and 10U in GRPA athletics will be in effect with exceptions the following:

- 1. All pitching will be done by an electric powered pitching machine using an underhanded delivery from forty feet at 37 mph except for 8U, which will be forty feet at 34 mph. The machine must be a minimum of 12" off the ground with a maximum of 24" from the bottom of the wheel. In the employment of the electric-powered pitching machine, machine height is important. The machine will be mounted on flat ground and the short legs will be used. Pitching machine wheel delivery point should be placed at the pitching distance set for each age group.

2. If a Jugs Jr. machine is used, the ball should be placed in the machine from top.
3. A qualified official will be stationed behind the catcher to call balls and strikes. The second official will be stationed behind the machine to feed machine and act as base umpire. Machine officials will be responsible for any adjustments to the machine and will present the ball to each batter prior to feeding machine.
4. When a batted ball hits a pitching machine, the umpire feeding the machine, or the extension cord off the ground, it is considered a “DEAD BALL SINGLE” and batter/runner will be awarded first base with all runners moving forward if forced. If a batted ball hits a defensive player then hits the machine, the batter is awarded first base and all other runners move up one base, if forced. Ball is dead when ball hits machine. When a thrown ball hits the pitching machine or the extension cord off the ground, it is considered a “DEAD BALL” and played as if thrown out of bounds.
5. An 8’ deep by 12’ wide rectangle box centered on the pitching plate in which the player in the pitching position must remain until the pitch is delivered. Defensive player must have at least one foot inside the box at time of the pitch.
6. No player shall be intentionally walked more than once per game. Count remains 3 and 2 until ball is hit or a strike-out occurs.
7. Players will be eligible for only one 8U or 10U division.
8. Ten defensive players shall be used in accordance with the following positions: one each of catcher, pitcher, first baseman, second baseman, third baseman, and short stop; and four outfielders. It is mandatory that the pitcher wear a face mask. In pitching machine and coach-pitch there must always be players in the pitcher and catcher roles. If playing shorthand, the player must come from the in- field or outfield. The team must have a battery.
 - a. No defensive coaches allowed on the field in 8U or 10U pitching machine.
9. Two EP’s (Extra Players) may be used in accordance to GRPA rules.
10. A line shall be drawn in the infield at the same distance as the pitching distance. No infielder is allowed **in front of the restrictive line until after** the ball is delivered through the machine, outfielders remain in outfield grass area (**behind a 60’ radius from the front edge of pitchers rubber**), and the pitcher must remain in the box. **Penalty: The penalty for violation of this rule is a delayed dead ball and the batting team having the choice of the result of the play or no pitch will be declared. A team warning will be issued on the 2nd offense, 3rd offense head coach ejected.** Count remains 3 and 2 until ball is hit or a strike out occurs except each player may be intentionally walked once per game. No player may be walked any more than once per game.

Bunting is not allowed in the 8U machine pitch. If a batter shows bunt, an out will be called. Bunting is allowed in 10U machine pitch. Fake bunts are not allowed. A fake bunt is when you pretend to bunt the ball and you get in bunting position, once the ball is released you pull the bat back and attempt to hit the ball.
11. **Stealing is not allowed in the 8U or 10U division.**
12. Infield fly rule is in effect for 10U ONLY.
13. In 10U pitching machine ONLY, a runner cannot run on a drop 3rd strike.
14. A courtesy runner may be used for catcher only.
15. Youth Softball with machine– when play has ceased the umpire will call time and all play will be stopped in machine pitch softball. The USA Softball look back rule does not apply in pitching machine softball.

10U LIVE FAST PITCH SOFTBALL SPECIAL RULES

1. Infield fly rule is in effect.
2. Helmets with face mask are required. A player cannot play without a face mask. The penalty will be treated as illegal equipment.
3. Runners may steal per USA Softball guidelines. Penalty is an out if leave too soon.
4. Nine defensive players will be used (three outfield players).
5. A courtesy runner may be used for catcher or pitcher.
6. No drop third strike.

8U COACH PITCH SOFTBALL SPECIAL RULES**Pitching Rules**

1. An offensive coach will pitch to his/her own team.
2. The coach may only coach the batter until she reaches first base or after she leaves third base. (Penalty: The coach will be replaced after the second occurrence for the remainder of the game.)
3. The pitcher may pitch anywhere from outside of the 20' foul arc and the pitching circle.
4. Pitcher may not cross the foul arc or enter the pitching circle (while pitching).
5. Pitcher must keep one foot on or straddle the pitching line.
6. Pitcher must pitch under-handed and may be without arch, but with moderate speed. (Any batted ball that hits the pitching coach will be a dead ball and called no pitch).
7. If the pitching coach intentionally allows the ball to hit him/her. (Penalty: batter is out - Umpire's Judgment). No runner may advance.
8. The offensive coach (pitcher) must attempt to avoid interference and try to pick-up the batter's bat provided he/she does not interfere with the play.
9. If the offensive coach (pitcher) does not attempt to get off the field and/or interferes with the defensive player to keep him/her from making a play will result in the batter being called out. No runner will advance.
10. It is mandatory that the pitcher wear a face mask.

Offense

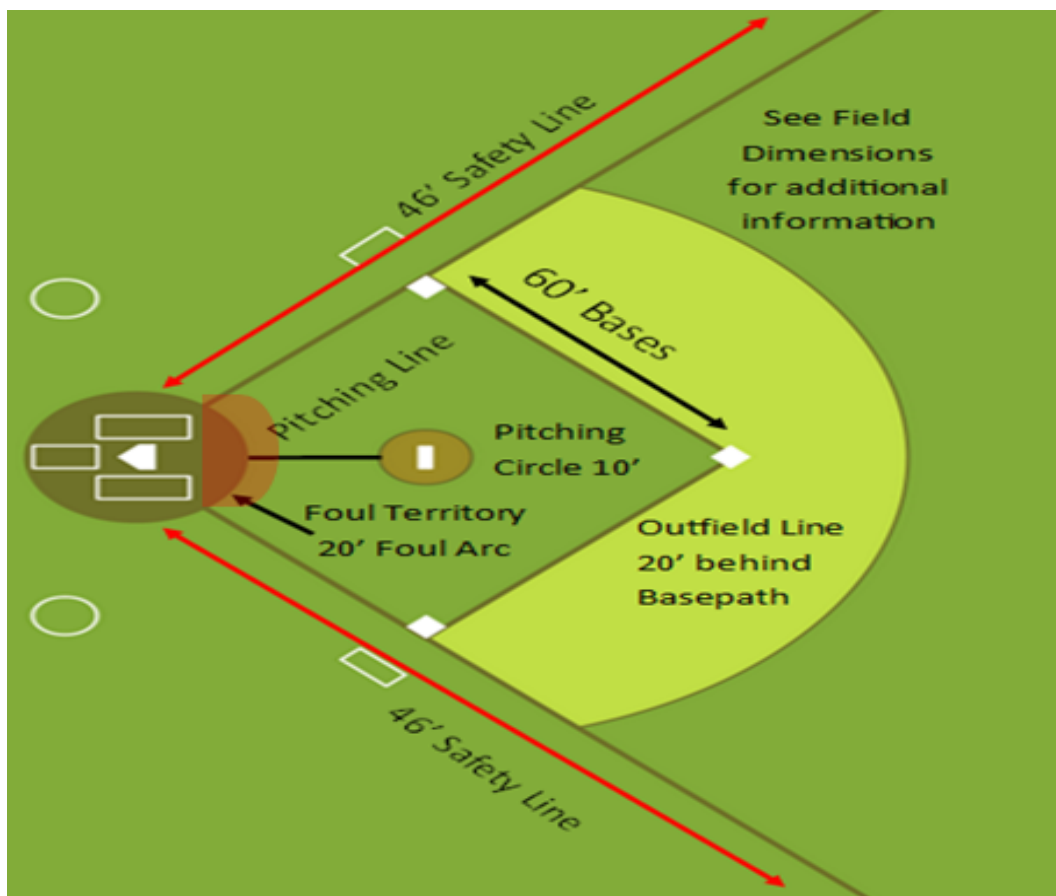
1. After one warning per game, per player for slinging her bat, the batter will be out, a dead ball called, and no runner will advance.
2. Batter will receive five pitches before being declared out.
3. Batter will be called out on three swinging strikes.
4. If the fifth pitch is fouled, she may continue to bat.
5. If the fifth pitch is fouled and caught, it is an out.
6. No bunting allowed. If a batter squares to bunt and then swings, she will be called out; this will be the umpire's judgment.
7. Any base runner leaving the base before the ball reaches home plate is out. (Penalty: The ball is dead and all other runners return to base occupied prior to pitch – umpire's judgement). The pitch will not count.
8. Any runner is out when she does not slide or attempt to avoid the fielder who has the ball in

the proximity of the base and is waiting to make a tag or if they maliciously run into a fielder.

9. Bat boys/girls will not be allowed in this division.
10. No offensive coaches allowed on the playing field.

Defense

1. No rolling the ball intentionally will be allowed.
2. The infield fly rule will not be in effect.
3. Only ten players on the field: six infielders (including pitcher & catcher) and four outfielders. In pitching machine and coach-pitch there must always be players in the pitcher and catcher roles. If playing shorthand, the player must come from the in-field or outfield. The team must have a battery.
4. The defensive player listed as a pitcher will stay in the 10' circle until the ball is hit. The player/pitcher may have one foot outside the circle. (Penalty: Offense gets choice of the play or no pitch).
5. Play shall not be stopped by the defensive team heading off or stopping the front runner. Trailing runners may advance at their own risk.
6. If a player is injured by being hit with a batted or thrown ball, time out will be called immediately. Bases will be awarded/outs will be called at the umpire's discretion based on each individual situation.
7. No defensive coaches allowed on the field.



RULE IX – YOUTH SWIMMING

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – CLASSIFICATIONS

1. Allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home or county agency has no swimming program.
 - b. No recruiting by the adjoining agency.
 - c. Cannot cross district lines.
 - d. Host agency endorsed participants.
 - e. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency. (Exception: see j. below).
 - f. Must participate in the sport/program in the Host agency/program.
 - g. If the participant resides in class “A” County, he/she cannot compete in “B/C” county.
 - h. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with the list and home-county of each crossover participant. The district must forward the information to the State Host & State Athletic Chair.
 - i. Participants must be approved by their District Athletic Chair. Any and all protests of crossovers must be done prior to district competition. Once they are approved, they are legal throughout the district and state.
 - j. When a private agency is the only provider of a program and a participant must purchase a membership plus pay fees then the participant will be allowed to participate with an agency across county lines.
 - k. If a swimmer lives within a subdivision that encompasses multiple counties or agencies, that swimmer can choose the agency to compete with.

1. To allow a participant to compete for the same team in GRPA that they do year round, as long as it is a GRPA agency team that is registered with USA Swimming. The participant must have a USA swim membership card presented at the time of participant check-in. The swimmer must be registered and an active member of the team for a period of 30 DAYS prior to state competition. The residency requirement must also be met and this is in addition to any USA swimming rule interpretations. A 60 day turnover period would be required for USA swimming membership with any waiver to the rule being disallowed for GRPA competition. A Swimmer who represents a USA Swim club in a competitive event, (60) consecutive days must have elapsed before the swimmer can represent another USA Swim Club in an open competition. The (60) day count shall begin on the day following the last date the athlete represented a USA Swim club in open competition.

2. All entries must be made electronically to the District and State host by Hy-Tek meet manager software or meet manager lite software for swimming Swimmers are allowed to dive at the turn end of the pool in sections where the water depth is at least four feet in depth.
3. Swimmers are allowed to dive at the turn end of the pool in sections where the water depth is at least four feet in depth.
- 4.. Class A - Agencies of 15,000 youth population or more.
5. Class B/C - Agencies of less than 15,000 youth population or any agency who appeal B or C.
6. State, federal, Private, Military, or related organizations participating are subject to youth population criteria to meet classification guidelines.

SECTION B – AGE DIVISIONS

1. There are five age divisions for boys and girls. The age divisions are as follows: (Cutoff Date - age on May 31.)
 - a. 8 & Under
 - b. 10 & Under
 - c. 12 & Under
 - d. 14 & Under
 - e. 18 & Under
2. Relay participants in District competition may qualify for the State Meet by Agency name only. Names of relay participants are required, and relay participants may be changed, added or substituted, provided that their names appear on their Agency's Official GRPA Roster and that they did not participate in a different age division. Agencies must send in qualifying individual results and they can only be entered in the state meet in the events they swam in the qualifying meets.
3. Participants in swimming relays cannot change from preliminaries to finals unless due to illness or injury. A relay team found to contain an ineligible swimmer or swimmers shall be disqualified. Substitutes must come from alternates listed on the roster.
 - a. If a swimmer misses an event during finals, they are disqualified from the remainder of the meet in their individual event(s) and relays. For relays if an alternate is listed and present, he/she may replace a disqualified swimmer.
 - b. During relays, the person cannot change but stroke/order can change.
4. Youth swim coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA- swimming, ACEP, GHSA, US Swimming or American Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches in conjunction with any nationally recognized lifeguard certification program, NCAA COACHES, ASCA or staff member. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event/meet (upon the discretion of the meet director and/or meet referee).

SECTION C – ENTRIES

1. All rosters and meet entries shall be submitted by the district or qualifying meet host utilizing Hy-Tek or Meet manager by the date specified by the State Host. When teams are submitting entries for District and State meets, the entries need to be labeled as the participating agency. The district host must complete state meet entries and submit entry sheet to be double checked by each of the teams from the district, before submitting to the state host. If submitted electronically you must also submit hard copy. Swimming Rosters must be typed and in alphabetical order. Each age group shall be on a separate roster.
2. A district having only one team participating in swimming may enter the State Meet, provided all rules and regulations concerning entry and eligibility as described in this Manual are met.
3. Individual competitors may enter a max of three individual swimming events and two relay events, including one freestyle and one medley relay.
4. Relay teams must be composed of members from one Agency team, and not a district-wide relay team or participants from more than one Agency Team. Names of relay entries must be submitted to the state host prior to the state entry deadline with the understanding that they can be changed prior to their competition. Agencies are allowed two alternates per relay event (to be used in the event of injury or sickness) and these alternates must already be on the official GRPA roster.
 - a. Mixed gender relays will be included for all age divisions.

- b. Mixed gender relays consist of two males and two females.
 - c. Eligible competitors may swim ONE FREE and ONE MEDLEY relay. Swimmers who qualify for 2 relays cannot swim 2 Free (same gender and mixed) or 2 Medley relays.
5. Relay Cards must be provided to the agency rep or coach for each team in the coach's packets upon arrival at the facility. If the team/agency does not utilize the relay cards or the approved computer change form to indicate any changes, they will have no recourse to challenge any changes to the relay including the order of the swimmers other than what was submitted at the entry deadline.
6. All agencies must enter swimmers as a team on Official Roster Forms. Entries must be made by agencies and not to be entered by associations, leagues, or individual teams.
7. The Recreation Agencies will be responsible for the entries and all monies getting to and being paid to the State and to the State Host.
8. If an individual competitor swims up in an age division for relay competition, he/she may swim their individual events in their age-eligible division throughout the entire meet. However, if an individual swims up in an age division for one relay (example - free), they must also compete up an age division if entered in the second relay (example - medley). Swimmers cannot compete in different age divisions for different relays.
9. In all events, a maximum of three entries will be accepted in any classification. **Any ties at the district or agency competition must be decided before entries are sent to the state host.** Four or more entries will not be accepted by the state host.
10. Class "A" Agencies:
- a. Agencies with 750 or more competitive swimmers that are registered locally to participate in GRPA competition shall be awarded three entries in each swimming event at the State Meet without district competition. (Participants in swim lessons and "open swim" do not count toward this total)
 - b. Districts that have agencies with 750 or more competitive swimmers within their district will be awarded three entries in swimming in the state meet. All other districts will be awarded three entries in each swimming event (Participants in swim lessons and "open swim" do not count toward this total)
 - c. For agencies utilizing this provision:
 - i. A certified letter must be signed by the agency director stating the agency has 750 competitive swimmers (6 years and above) participating in their swim program. Participants in swim lessons and "open swim" do not count toward this total.
 - ii. Complete rosters from the teams that comprise the 750+ swimmers which will include team name, team's physical address, team contact information, and full names of participants.
 - iii. District must approve and send to state prior to the district swim entry meeting or June 1st, whichever comes first.
 - d. For 750+ agencies, custom relay times will be allowed for state relay entries provided that the individual event times used to make the custom relay times were swam at the qualifying meet. If custom relay times are submitted, the 750+ Agency submitting the relay entries must clearly indicate to the State Host where the custom times were derived (highlight the times in the qualifying meet results). If individual event times are not available or submitted from the

qualifying meet, the relay must be entered in the state meet as No Time (NT).

- e. **All meet entries must be submitted by the district or qualifying meet host utilizing Hy-Tek or Meet manager. Failure to use electronic entries will result in a minimum fine of \$250 plus any scratch fees at regular price.**
- f. **750+ agency entries should be on one entry file with one agency name. Swimmers from 750+ agencies must be listed by their agency team's name on the state entries rather than the community team's name that may have been used at the qualifying meet.**

11. Class "B & C" Agencies: Each district shall be awarded three entries in swimming events at the State Meet.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES (GRPA and US SWIMMING)

1. The GRPA State Swimming Meet shall be governed by this Manual. In any situation which may not be covered by this Manual, the Meet Director, in consultation with the GRPA State Athletic Committee Chair if he deems it necessary, shall have the authority to make the final decision.
2. All situations not specifically covered by this Manual concerning meet regulations, shall be handled in accordance with the current US Swimming Rule Book.
3. All GRPA state meets will file applications with US Swim to have the meet classified as a US Swim Observed Meet so the times will be recognized.
4. All participating agencies are required to attend one of the statewide swim meetings/webinars to cover the rules and regulations for the state swim meet. Agencies that do not attend must pay a fine of \$200 to the GRPA office. It is **"Strongly Recommended"** that both an agency member and swim coach from each agency or team attend a swim meeting/webinar to ensure that all necessary parties are clear on any rule changes or clarifications.
5. Have host produce a Power Point that highlights guidelines for swim participation and display power point on GRPA website 60 days in advance of swim meet or have someone tape a video that is put on the GRPA website and have it displayed on the website.
6. Per the "Return to Play Act of 2013", effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
7. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
8. The practice of deck changing is prohibited at all GRPA events. Swimmers participating in deck changing would be in violation of the USA Swimming Rule concerning deck changing and could be subject to removal from further competition in the meet.
9. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – EVENTS

1. Swimming events in each age division for boys and girls are as follows: (Length of competition in yards)

	<u>8U & 10U</u>		<u>12U, 14U, & 18U</u>
<u>Yards</u>	<u>Style</u>	<u>Yards</u>	<u>Style</u>
50	Freestyle	100	Freestyle
100	Medley Relay	200	Medley Relay
100	Medley Relay (Mixed)	200	Medley Relay (Mixed)
25	Freestyle	50	Freestyle
25	Breast Stroke	50	Breast Stroke
100	Individual Medley	100	Individual Medley
25	Backstroke	50	Backstroke
25	Butterfly	50	Butterfly
100	Freestyle Relay	200	Freestyle Relay
100	Freestyle Relay (Mixed)	200	Freestyle Relay (Mixed)

2. “A”, “B” and “C” Meets
 - a. Using an eight lane pool, swimmers shall be seeded in preliminary heats according to US Swimming guidelines. The top eight times [top six times in a six lane pool] from the preliminaries shall advance to the Finals. If there are eight [six in a six lane pool] or less swimmers in an age group entered in a single event, that event will be swam as a timed final during the preliminary heats.
3. Schedule of Competition. At the discretion of the state athletic committee, the order of events may be altered in single classification meets. Friday – Prelims for all age groups; Saturday – Finals for all age groups.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. All rules for swimming the strokes, for starts and turns, and for relays, shall be taken directly from the current US Swimming Rule Book. PER GRPA Rules, Swimmers are allowed to dive at the turn end of the pool in sections where the water depth is at least four feet in depth.
2. Swimmers less than 13 years of age cannot wear swim suits that go below the knees or extend below the shoulders.
3. Dive-over starts shall be permitted for preliminaries with the final decision to be made in consultation with the meet referee. Dive-over starts are not permitted during the finals.
4. Mixed Gender Relays must consist of two males and two females.
5. The use of a bullpen is optional and shall be determined by the meet host/tournament director.
6. Each team will be allowed 2 coaches on the swim deck at a time. Larger teams will be allowed an additional coach on deck at a ratio of 1 for every 25 swimmers up to a max of 4 coaches. Coaches are not permitted to coach from the block areas. Coaches may be on the deck on either side of the pool but may not coach from the blocks.
7. Each team shall receive 6 current copies of both the heat sheets and entry sheets by 7am each day of the meet. At the discretion of State host if less than a ratio of 1 to 20 swimmers.
8. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms/swim caps in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Swimmers who fail to comply will be subject to USA swimming rules and

will be barred from competition until they comply but are not subject to disqualification.

EXCEPTION: THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE SWIM SUITS.

ARTICLE III – FACILITY/EQUIPMENT/TIMING

SECTION A – FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

1. The facility for the State Meet shall meet standards as set forth by US Swimming for an eight or six lane pool.
2. The pool shall be equipped with acceptable pool depths, **starting blocks on both ends**, lane dividers, backstroke flags, and a recall rope. If a pool cannot have starting blocks on both ends of the pool, then touch pads will be required at both ends. Swimmers are allowed to dive at the turn end of the pool in sections where the water depth is at least 4 feet.
3. All other items as necessary for the successful operation of the meet, such as adequate seating, restrooms, concessions, watches, pistols, etc., shall be provided by the host agency for District and State Competition.

SECTION B – TIMING

1. Fully-automatic electronic timing with touch pads shall be required for State level swimming competition, and is highly recommended for District competition. Times shall be reported to two decimal places only (100ths of a second). Times shall be listed in hundredths only. All state records shall be reported to the hundredth of a second with no rounding off.
2. Two back-up timing systems shall be available at all times when electronic timing is being used. This could consist of (a) a manual backup built into the timing system plus one watch per lane or (b) three watches per lane. OPTIONAL: Two across-the-board finish judges may be used at all times with either backup system.
3. For timing adjustments and malfunctions, refer to the USA Swim Rules.

ARTICLES IV – MEETS AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

1. No additions or substitutions are allowed after entries have been submitted. Entries are final once they have been submitted to the State Host. Agencies and Districts have the sole responsibility of verifying the accuracy of each entry.
2. A copy of the district results will be forwarded to the State Host along with the State entries. Official rosters are to be signed by the meet director from district competition. Birth certificates are not required from district competition. EXCEPTION: Agencies with over 750 swimmers conducting their own qualifying meet must submit an official roster signed by the agency director along with birth certificates for verification. The State Host will verify the information for accuracy and sign the roster.
3. Each agency will be allowed only two coaches on the deck during the state meet.
4. The name and contact information of the District Swim Meet Coordinator, each participating team's department representative, and all swim coaches who participated in the district competition, must be faxed or emailed to the state host within forty-eight hours of the conclusion of the district meet.

SECTION B – STATE

Seeding of all preliminaries will be done in accordance with US Swimming guidelines. The finals shall be seeded (in accordance with US Swimming guidelines) with the eight fastest times [six fastest times in six lane pool] from the preliminaries in both the "A" and "B" and "C" State Meet. Places will be awarded by time for swimming. Team scores will be provided by the host, with no awards given.

SECTION C – AWARDS

1. “A”, “B” and “C” Meets: Awards will be given to the top eight finishers in each event from the finals. Individual medals will be awarded for 1st – 3rd place. Ribbons will be awarded for 4th – 8th place. State meet host must provide an awards podium for 1st – 3rd place. **Awards given are per state awards contract and cannot be substituted or changed.** If emergencies arise then the state athletic committee chair in consultation with the GRPA Executive Director will determine what course of action to take.
2. Medals will be given to places 1st-3rd and ribbons for 4th-8th. Award **MUST** be labeled by place and must have swimmers name, place, time and date (HY-TEK Meet Manager can produce and stick labels on back cover or ribbon tab).
3. Allow results from preliminaries to be used to determine final times for events that are cancelled in finals. If finals have begun, the final times in events that have been completed would count. However, if due to inclement weather or any other reason that an event cannot be completed in finals, times achieved in prelims will be considered timed finals.

ARTICLE V – DISQUALIFICATIONS AND PROTESTS

1. A participant may be disqualified from an event for failure to swim a stroke correctly or exhibiting unsportsmanlike conduct. Any protest or clarification of this decision must come from the participant’s coach or Agency representative only. No parents shall be allowed to file a protest or approach any official while the Meet is in progress, subject to the disqualification of the swimmer for the duration of the meet. A protest shall be filed with the Meet Director, who then has the authority to take it to the State Athletic Committee, if he deems necessary, or make a ruling on the spot. Judgment disqualifications cannot be protested (i.e., disqualifications on a stroke) per USA Swimming regulations.
2. A swimmer will be disqualified if two or more judges agreed that a false start occurred by the same swimmer (dual confirmation). The swimmer would be notified at the end of the race.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICIALS AND THEIR DUTIES

SECTION A – HOST OFFICIALS

The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing all officials (US Swim and National Federation High School Swim Officials Accepted) necessary for the proper management of the State Meet, including starter, stroke and turn judges, finish judges, timers, scorers, clerk of course, awards personnel, announcer, and any others deemed necessary by the Host Agency.

SWIMMING ORDER OF EVENTs**Prelims FOR ALL CLASSES/AGES will be swam on Friday and ALL Finals are on Saturday**

Swim Order EVENT	STROKE & DISTANCE	AGE GROUPS	Swim Order EVENT	STROKE & DISTANCE	AGE GROUPS
1	50 FREE	6 - 8 GIRLS	46	100 IM	6 - 8 GIRLS
2	50 FREE	6 - 8 BOYS	47	100 IM	6 - 8 BOYS
3	50 FREE	9 - 10 GIRLS	48	100 IM	9 - 10 GIRLS
4	50 FREE	9 - 10 BOYS	49	100 IM	9 - 10 BOYS
5	100 FREE	11 - 12 GIRLS	50	100 IM	11 - 12 GIRLS
6	100 FREE	11 - 12 BOYS	51	100 IM	11 - 12 BOYS
7	100 FREE	13 - 14 GIRLS	52	100 IM	13 - 14 GIRLS
8	100 FREE	13 - 14 BOYS	53	100 IM	13 - 14 BOYS
9	100 FREE	15 - 18 GIRLS	54	100 IM	15 - 18 GIRLS
10	100 FREE	15 - 18 BOYS	55	100 IM	15 - 18 BOYS
11	100 MR	8 & UNDER GIRLS	56	25 BACK	6 - 8 GIRLS
12	100 MR	8 & UNDER BOYS	57	25 BACK	6 - 8 BOYS
13	100 MR	8 & UNDER MIXED	58	25 BACK	9 - 10 GIRLS
14	100 MR	10 & UNDER GIRLS	59	25 BACK	9 - 10 BOYS
15	100 MR	10 & UNDER BOYS	60	50 BACK	11 - 12 GIRLS
16	100 MR	10 & UNDER MIXED	61	50 BACK	11 - 12 BOYS
17	200 MR	12 & UNDER GIRLS	62	50 BACK	13 - 14 GIRLS
18	200 MR	12 & UNDER BOYS	63	50 BACK	13 - 14 BOYS
19	200 MR	12 & UNDER MIXED	64	50 BACK	15 - 18 GIRLS
20	200 MR	14 & UNDER GIRLS	65	50 BACK	15 - 18 BOYS
21	200 MR	14 & UNDER BOYS	66	25 FLY	6 - 8 GIRLS
22	200 MR	14 & UNDER MIXED	67	25 FLY	6 - 8 BOYS
23	200 MR	18 & UNDER GIRLS	68	25 FLY	9 - 10 GIRLS
24	200 MR	18 & UNDER BOYS	69	25 FLY	9 - 10 BOYS
25	200 MR	18 & UNDER MIXED	70	50 FLY	11 - 12 GIRLS
26	25 FREE	6 - 8 GIRLS	71	50 FLY	11 - 12 BOYS
27	25 FREE	6 - 8 BOYS	72	50 FLY	13 - 14 GIRLS
28	25 FREE	9 - 10 GIRLS	73	50 FLY	13 - 14 BOYS
29	25 FREE	9 - 10 BOYS	74	50 FLY	15 - 18 GIRLS
30	50 FREE	11 - 12 GIRLS	75	50 FLY	15 - 18 BOYS
31	50 FREE	11 - 12 BOYS	76	100 FR	8 & UNDER GIRLS
32	50 FREE	13 - 14 GIRLS	77	100 FR	8 & UNDER BOYS
33	50 FREE	13 - 14 BOYS	78	100 FR	8 & UNDER MIXED
34	50 FREE	15 - 18 GIRLS	79	100 FR	10 & UNDER GIRLS
35	50 FREE	15 - 18 BOYS	80	100 FR	10 & UNDER BOYS
36	25 BREAST	6 - 8 GIRLS	81	100 FR	10 & UNDER MIXED
37	25 BREAST	6 - 8 BOYS	82	200 FR	12 & UNDER GIRLS
38	25 BREAST	9 - 10 GIRLS	83	200 FR	12 & UNDER BOYS
39	25 BREAST	9 - 10 BOYS	84	200 FR	12 & UNDER MIXED
40	50 BREAST	11 - 12 GIRLS	85	200 FR	14 & UNDER GIRLS
41	50 BREAST	11 - 12 BOYS	86	200 FR	14 & UNDER BOYS
42	50 BREAST	13 - 14 GIRLS	87	200 FR	14 & UNDER MIXED
43	50 BREAST	13 - 14 BOYS	88	200 FR	18 & UNDER GIRLS
44	50 BREAST	15 - 18 GIRLS	89	200 FR	18 & UNDER BOYS
45	50 BREAST	15 - 18 BOYS	90	200 FR	18 & UNDER MIXED
Session Break after #45.			End of Prelims/Finals		

- Except timed
 Finals where 8
 or less and they
 will be on
 Friday.** Mixed
 Relays added
 2016 **

RULE X – YOUTH AND ADULT GOLF

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. There are seven age divisions for competition in golf. Participant must be 6 years old by the age control date. (Cutoff Date - age July 31)
2. The age divisions are as follows:

<u>YOUTH</u>	<u>ADULT*</u>
8 & Under Boys and Girls	19 and Over Men and Women
11 & Under Boys and Girls	55 and Over Men and Women
13 & Under Boys and Girls	<i>*Adults will be a two-day tournament with handicap first day and play tournament next day.</i>
15 & Under Boys and Girls	
18 & Under Boys and Girls	

3. Allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions.
 - a. Home agency has no program.
 - b. No recruiting by the adjoining agency.
 - c. Cannot cross district lines.
 - d. Host agency endorsed participant.
 - e. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - f. Must participate in the sport program in the Host agency program.
 - g. If live in an “A” class county, you cannot compete in “B/C” county. Must compete in nearest “A” county. “B/C” may compete up in “A”
 - h. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and home county of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
 - i. Participants must be approved by District Athletic Chair and any and all protest of crossovers must be done prior to district competition. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
4. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, or GHSA.
5. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

SECTION B – ENTRIES AND FEES

1. An agency may not submit more than five entries per division in each age classification. (APPROVED RULING: A district by majority vote and consent of at least one State Athletic Committee member may increase or decrease the number of entries in district level competitions).
2. A district not conducting a district golf tournament may allow multiple agencies to represent the district at the state tournament.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. Events in GRPA golf tournaments shall have divisions for male/female in the following competition format: **All divisions: Individual competition**
2. The tournament hosts with the approval of the State Athletic Committee shall determine the pairings and tee times for all divisions.

SECTION B – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. GRPA golf tournaments shall be scored without regard to handicap in all Youth Divisions. Adults will use handicap system to determine division of play only.
2. Players in all youth divisions shall walk the course; EXCEPTION: In 8U, 11U, and 13U divisions, players can ride the course as long as they are with an adult. Any player in the youth division shall be able to use a pull cart pending tournament director's approval. Players in adult divisions shall be required to ride.
3. Competition in all divisions except 11 and under shall consist of 18 holes, one-day play.
 - a. Adult Men and 18U Boys Golf – BACK
 - b. Boys 13U, Boys 15U, and 55 & Over – MIDDLE
 - c. Boys 11U, All Female divisions except for 8U – FRONT
 - d. 8U Boys and Girls – 100 Yards from green on Par 3's, 150 Yards from green on Par 4's and 200 Yards from green on Par 5's (To be flagged by host.)
4. Youth – morning tee times.
5. Adult – morning and/or afternoon tee times.
6. Double par is the highest score allowed on any hole in GRPA district and state tournament play.
7. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment

ARTICLE III – TOURNAMENT AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

Each district shall have the right to conduct its own golf tournament in a manner approved by the majority of the participating district agencies and provided any exceptions to the rules in this manual are approved by a district's State Athletic Committee Member. District or host agencies are responsible for all district awards.

SECTION B – STATE

1. All state golf tournaments (youth and adult) shall be set by the State Host
2. Any revision of dates must be approved by the State Athletic Committee Chair.
3. All first and second place finishers in all divisions at the district level shall qualify for the state tournament. Others are allowed at the discretion of the State Tournament Host.
4. Each district's Tournament Director is responsible for submitting state entries to be in the hands of the state host fourteen (14) days prior to the state tournament. Failure to meet this shall result in DISTRICT DISQUALIFICATION from the state tournament.

5. State awards will be awarded to Champion and Runner Up.
6. Entries shall consist of the following:

Example:

District, Age, Division, Sex, District Place First & Last Name, Agency, Results

ARTICLE IV – OFFICIALS

SECTION A – OFFICIALS

Members of the State Athletic Committee shall serve as the Tournament Committee (Jury of Appeals) and the Chair shall serve as Associate Tournament Director for the state tournament. Each District Commissioner is encouraged to provide a similar authority for district tournaments.

SECTION B – COMPETITORS AND ATTENDANTS

USGA rules regarding the conduct of players and spectators to include language, throwing or slamming of equipment, slow play, cheating, gambling, drinking, and flagrant violations will be strictly adhered to.

ARTICLE V – DEFAULTS

Any default will result in that agency being fined \$10.00 per person and any participant that withdraws from State competition will be suspended from GRPA golf competition for one year. (Youth violations responsible only for default fee. Adult violations responsible for default fee and suspensions.)

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

Protests and appeals are authorized only under stipulations found in this manual.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE XI – YOUTH AND ADULT VOLLEYBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

1. Age Control Date: on September 1, current year
2. There are eighteen divisions of play. Participant must be 6 years old by the age control date. The divisions are:

<u>YOUTH</u>	<u>ADULT</u>
8 & Under Girls/Boys/Coed	Women
10 & Under Girls/Boys/Coed	Men
12 & Under Girls/Boys/Coed	Coed
14 & Under Girls/Boys/Coed	
17 & Under Girls/Boys/Coed	

3. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
4. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, USAV, or GHSA.
5. A participant is allowed to compete in either women's or men's divisions in addition to the co-ed division.
6. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for the remainder of the current match.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. The accepted guide for adult volleyball at all levels is governed by the current rules and regulations of the USVA, authorized by the International Volleyball Federation, with the exceptions as may be found in this manual is the accepted guide.
2. Per the "Return to Play Act of 2013", effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
3. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA
4. Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing

the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

1. A regulation game will be twenty-five points; the final regulation game will be played to fifteen points, although a team must win by two in any set.
2. YOUTH
 - a. A youth match will consist of the best two out of three sets. The first two games are played to 25 with the third game being played to 15. Teams must win each game by two. If teams are tied after two games at 1-1 then a third game is played to 15; teams must still win the third game by two points.
 - b. Scores of forfeits will be records as 25-0 each game of match: Matches 2-0; Sets 25-0, 25-0
 - c. Warm-Up Session: Teams receive separate warm up play on the court for either 3 minutes or 5 minutes each. Team that has first service takes first turn on court.
3. ADULT
 - a. An adult match will consist of the best three out of five sets. The first four games are played to 25 with the fifth game being played to 15. Teams must win each game by two. If teams are tied after four games at 2-2 then a fifth game is played to 15; teams must still win the fifth game by two points.
 - b. Scores of forfeits will be records as 25-0 each game of match: Matches 3-0; Sets 25-0, 25-0, 25-0
 - c. Warm-Up Session: Teams receive separate warm up play on the court for 5 minutes each. Team that has first service takes first turn on court.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

1. No game in State Tournament can start before 7:00 PM on weeknights.
2. A team must have six (6) players to start a game. They may continue with (5) as long as the player leaves for any other reason than ejection.
3. A coin toss will determine the choice of team area or the service. The winner of the toss choose either playing area or the right to serve. If a deciding set is to be played, a new toss will be carried out.
4. In a coed tournament, play a minimum of three (3) females must be in the game at all times.
5. Maximum roster size is 12 players per team.
6. All protests will be settled before the next live ball.
7. If a team does not have sufficient players to start a game after the first referee requests play to begin, that team loses the game by default, the score shall be recorded as 25-0. An interval of up to 10 minutes shall be allowed for the team to have sufficient players to play the next game. If the team has six (6) players prior to the expiration of this interval, play shall begin immediately. After the 10 minute interval if the team still does not have six players present and ready to play, the match shall be declared a default.
8. 10U Girls/Boys/Coed may serve underhand up to the 10' line. Overhand serves must be attempted from behind the modified 25' baseline.

8U Specifics

1. Player Rotation: snake rotation
 - a. Definition of snake rotation: Standard clockwise rotation. Player from position 2 moves out to bench and player from bench enters position 1 to serve.
 - b. When the receiving team gains service, they must rotate their first server in from the bench. If a player is not being played in a set, they must sit in the stands with their parent/guardian. They cannot sit on the bench unless they are in the lineup for that set.
NOTE: If a player gets injured on the court, the player comes out of the game and they rotate one player in from bench. The player rotated in will lose their service position, but no points are lost. Once the injured player is replaced the team who has service keeps service.

10U and Older Specifics

1. Substitution – refer to USAV Official Rules for more detail.
 - a. Player Substitutions
 - i. Must be carried out within the substitution zone; between the 10 foot line and the net on the team's side.
 - ii. Max substitutions per set per team is eighteen (18). Players may only substitute for one player per set.
 - b. Libero Replacements
 - i. Libero replacements are not counted as substitutions. They are unlimited but there must be a completed rally between two replacements.
 - ii. A libero may ONLY replace a back-row player.
 - iii. Only take place while the ball is out of play and before the whistle of service.
 - iv. All replacements must be recorded by the Libero Tracker on the Libero Control Sheet.
2. Player Rotation: GHSA rotation
 - a. When a receiving team gains service, they must rotate to their first server. A team cannot start a service without rotating; unless they are the first serving team of the set.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

The game ball will be a USAV approved ball and shoes are mandatory.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. A uniform for volleyball is defined as a team shirt or jersey with numbers on the front and back identical in style and color with players on the same team. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. If players have illegal jerseys, teams will forfeit until they meet the standards for game play.
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. (***EFFECTIVE January 2025***)
2. If a libero is used, that player must have a team shirt or jersey different in color from the rest of the team with a number on the front and back.
3. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee

members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.

- a. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach the bases must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.
4. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment

SECTION C – COURT REQUIREMENTS

The court will be set to regulation USAV official dimensions. Any changes must be approved by the State Athletic Chair.

1. The net height will be:

Youth		Adult	
Division	Height	Division	Height
8U Girls/Boys/Coed	6'	Men Coed	8'
10U Girls/Boys/Coed	7'5"	Women	7'5"
12U Girls/Boys/Coed			
14U Girls/Boys/Coed			
17U Girls/Boys/Coed	8'		

2. Court Size & Serving:

Youth			Adult		
Division	Size	Service	Division	Size	Service
8U Girls/Boys/Coed 10U Girls/Boys/Coed	50' x 30'	Up to 10' line	Men Women Coed	60' x 30'	Regulation
12U Girls/Boys/Coed 14U Girls/Boys/Coed 17U Girls/Boys/Coed	60' x 30'	Regulation			

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

District level competition in all divisions of Volleyball is to be completed by the second Sunday in November.

SECTION B – STATE

All Divisions shall begin the third weekend in November or the weekend before Thanksgiving (must be approved by the State Athletic Committee).

SECTION C – TOURNAMENT SPECIFICS

Double elimination. YOUTH: A regulation match is best two out of three sets. First two sets played to 25 and third set played to 15. ADULT: A regulation match is best 3 out of 5 sets. The first 4 games are played to 25 with the fifth game being played to 15.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – HOST

1. Host Agency shall provide a minimum number of competent adults for scorers, libero trackers, line judges, Tournament Director, and a minimum of two (2) officials approved by the State Chair.

2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing USAV or GHSA approved volleyballs.
 - a. 8U and 10U Divisions will use a volley lite volleyball.
 - b. 12U and up will use a regulation size volleyball.
3. Host must have two (2) courts available to run matches consecutively.

SECTION B – GAME OFFICIALS

A minimum of two (2) sanctioned USAV or GHSA officials per court shall be used in district and state level GRPA competition. All officials should be either USAV or GHSA REGISTERED or in the process of certification.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

SECTION A – PROTESTS AND VOLLEYBALL RULES INFRACTION

1. The judgment decision by an official on any play shall not be protested.
2. Protest on misinterpretation of the rules are allowed to the referee and if accepted as valid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any such protest and shall serve as the odd-number member of the Tournament Protest Committee as determined prior to the game by the Agency Host in coordination with the District Commissioner for District level.
3. Protests and appeals are authorized only under stipulations found in this manual.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section

RULE XII- YOUTH SOCCER

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. Participants must be age 6 by the age control date: on September 1, current year.
2. There are ten age divisions of play:

GIRLS	MALE/COED
8 & Under	8 & Under
10 & Under	10 & Under
12 & Under	12 & Under
14 & Under	14 & Under
17 & Under	17 & Under

3. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
4. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, or GYSA.
5. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

SECTION B – CLASSIFICATION

Divided into two classifications: Class A and Class B/C – This shall be for teams that are an integral part of competition in local league play for their local member recreation agency.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. The current rules in this manual govern youth soccer at all levels. If rule interpretation is not found in this manual, interpretation will defer to GYSA (USYS). If neither GRPA nor GYSA can clarify, the GHSA (NFHS) rules may be used.
2. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.

3. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
4. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

Division	Regulation Time	Halftime
8U 10U 12U	two 30 minute halves	5 minutes
14U	two 35 minute halves	
17U	two 40 minute halves	

1. For GRPA District and State playoff games, if no team has won the match at the end of regulation play, one 10-minute overtime period will next be used to break the tie. The teams will exchange ends after 5-minutes of play and a 2-minute interval. The 10-minute overtime is played to conclusion, as there is NO golden goal.
2. If no goals are scored during the overtime play, a best of 5 FIFA kicks from the penalty mark will be taken to determine the winner. If still tied at the end of the 5 kicks, sudden death kicks (if the first team makes their kick in sudden death the second team will have the opportunity to match the goal) from the penalty mark will take place with each team naming a new five players to take the kicks. If the score is still tied after exhausting all players on the roster, the first five players may be named to kick again.
3. Inclement Weather Plan:
 - a. **Play as many games as possible as scheduled.**
 - b. Move game times back and start later.
 - c. If game times have to be moved back play reduced time periods not to be less than 20 minutes.
 - d. Consider playing on Sunday if teams and facility are available.
 - e. If Sunday is not an option and teams do not want to return another weekend then we would go to penalty kicks as a last resort.
 - f. Penalty kicks should only be utilized as a last resort and GRPA prefers that they be used after games have been able to start but cannot be completed. If no other choice remains then penalty kicks would be utilized to determine the winner.
4. Soccer Mercy Rule: In accordance with the National Federation allowance for a state adoption when there is a competitive imbalance between the teams, the match will be shortened as follows:
 - a. If a team is *seven* (7) or more goals down at the midpoint of the first half, that will be considered the end of the half, and the teams will play a twenty (20) minute second half.
 - b. If a team is *seven* (7) or more goals behind at halftime, the second half will be restricted to twenty (20) minutes.
 - c. When a team is *ten* (10) or more goals behind in the second half, the game will be terminated.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.

1. A team may finish with the number listed below as long as the player did not leave the game by ejection

Division	Start Game	Finish Game
8U	6 (6v6)	5
10U	7 (7v7)	6
12U	9 (9v9)	8
14U 17U	11 (11v11)	10

2. Substitutions
 - a. A substitute who desires to enter the game shall be at the center line or report to the scorer, giving his/her jersey number and the number of the player being replaced. If the entry is made at a time other than between periods, the scorer shall cause the timer to signal immediately after the whistle has sounded. The substitute shall remain at the center line or the scorer's table until an official beckons the player onto the field of play.
 - b. When there is no official scorer and time, incoming substitutes shall report directly to the nearest official from the official area or be at the center line.
 - c. Either team may substitute:
 - i. Between Periods.
 - ii. On a goal kick.
 - iii. When play is stopped for an injury, the injured player shall be replaced.
 - iv. When a player is cautioned.
 - v. Disqualification of a player
 - d. A team having gained possession of the ball for a throw-in or corner kick may substitute as many players as it desires provided each player is at the center line and has reported before the ball goes out of bounds. The team causing the ball to go out of bounds shall not substitute at this time.
 - e. When a team repeatedly substitutes to consume time, an official shall order the timer to stop the time clock during such substitutions and shall notify the coach of the offending team the repetition may be construed as unsportsmanlike conduct.
 - f. A player leaving the field of play during the progress of the game without the consent of an official (except through normal movement of play) shall be guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct unless stopping play to assess the penalty would be an advantage to the offending team
 - g. Entry onto the field of play by a substitute, trainer, or coach is prohibited without the approval of an official.
 - h. When play has stopped, one of the players on the field may change places with the goalkeeper. Any time the goalkeeper is changed, an official shall be notified.
3. Heading the ball is not allowed in 8U or 10U age divisions. An indirect free kick will be awarded to the opposing team at the spot where a player deliberately touches the ball with his/her head.

4. If the defending team deliberately heads the ball inside the goal area, the attacking team will be awarded an indirect free kick from the edge of the goal area.
5. No new game should be originally scheduled after 10:00 PM on weekdays. All games will be scheduled and start no later than 10:00 PM on Friday and Saturday nights but may be played in emergency situations (rain, game delays, etc.)
6. No age division in GRPA Soccer will use a build-out line
7. Offsides will be called in all age groups.
8. Goalies may release the ball in any form they choose after making a save.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Shoes are mandatory for play in all divisions of soccer as specified by GHSA Rule Book.
 - a. Ages 14U and above may wear screw-in cleats, but 8U-12U year must wear shoes with rubber- molded cleats or smooth, soft-soled shoes, such as tennis or basketball shoes.
2. The approved soccer balls for division are as follows:
 - a. The 8U divisions will use a #3 hand-sewn synthetic ball.
 - b. The 10U & 12U divisions will use a #4 hand-sewn synthetic ball.
 - c. The 14U and 17U divisions will use a #5 hand-sewn synthetic leather ball.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. A uniform for youth soccer shall be a jersey, shoes, socks (must all match in color and style) and shin guards. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments.
Penalty – Illegal Equipment
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. ***(EFFECTIVE January 2025)***
2. A jersey or team shirt must be alike in style and color with players on the same team and must have factory type numbers on the front or back. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same.
3. The jersey of the goalkeeper shall be distinctly different from that of any teammate, opponent, or referee and does not require a number.
4. It is recommended that each team have 2 sets of uniform shirts of different colors.
5. The Host Agency shall be responsible for supplying scrimmage vests in events where jerseys need to be opposite colors. A coin toss shall be conducted and the winner shall have the option of whether to wear the scrimmage vests or original jerseys.
6. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.

Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

SECTION C – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. The following field specifications are required for all games:

Division	Field Width	Field Length	Goals
8U	30 Yard Min.	50 Yard Min.	6' High Min. - 7' High Max.
	40 Yard Max.	60 Yard Max.	12' Wide Min. – 21' Wide Max.
	*Penalty kicks will be taken from 8 yards from goal line when tie-breaker shootouts occur.		
10U	40 Yard Min.	60 Yard Min.	6' High Min. - 7' High Max.
	50 Yard Max.	70 Yard Max.	18' Wide Min. – 21' Wide Max.
12U	40 Yard Min.	60 Yard Min.	6' High Min. - 7' High Max.
	60 Yard Max.	100 Yard Max.	18' Wide Min. – 21' Wide Max.
14U 17U	50 Yard Min.	100 Yard Min.	8' High
	80 Yard Max.	130 Yard Max.	24' Wide

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS**SECTION A – DISTRICT & STATE**

1. The Host Agency shall provide a minimum number of competent adults for scorers and timers, a Tournament Director, and two (2) Registered officials. The referee will be responsible for keeping the official time.
2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for proper conduct by spectators.
3. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing the game ball in accordance with GRPA specifications in these rules.
4. The Host Agency shall be responsible for seeing that the playing field requirements meet GRPA specifications.
5. The Host Agency must supply mesh scrimmage vest in the case that teams have the same jersey color.
6. No teams shall be required to play more than **three** games in a day. A mandatory rest time is required only before the championship game –it shall be 3 hours in a single elimination tournament - if teams vote to start early, the game cannot start in less than 2 hours without special circumstances. (i.e. weather, travel times, approaching storms)
7. District level competition in soccer is to be completed as follows.
 - a. All youth divisions (8U, 10U, 12U, 14U and 17U) a minimum of 10 days prior to the State tournament. Pool play is optional.
8. State level competition will be pool play. Any forfeit done during pool play will result in a \$750.00 fine payable to state host. For other forfeit information please see page 2

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS**SECTION A – HOST**

1. The Host Agency shall provide a minimum number of competent adults for scorers and timers, a Tournament Director, and two registered officials. The referee will be responsible for keeping the official time.

2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for proper conduct by spectators.
3. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing the game ball in accordance with GRPA specifications in these rules.
4. The Host Agency shall be responsible for seeing that the playing field requirements meet GRPA specifications.
5. The Host Agency must supply mesh scrimmage vest in the case that teams have the same jersey color.

SECTION B – GAME OFFICIALS

A minimum of two (2) registered officials must be employed for state level GRPA competition. It is recommended these officials be GHSA, Georgia State Soccer or USSF REGISTERED. If two officials are used, they both must be at least 18 years old. If three officials are used, the center official must be at least 18 years old but the other two may be younger (but older than the age group they are officiating).

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

SECTION A – PROTESTS FOR SOCCER RULES INFRACTIONS

1. The judgment decision by the referee on any play shall not be protested.
2. Protests on misinterpretation of the rules are allowed to the referee and if accepted as valid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any such protest committee as determined prior to the game by the Agency Host in coordination with the District Commissioner for District level competition and with the State Athletic Committee Chair for state levels of competition. If a protest is accepted by the Tournament Director, it must be made by the team coach or responsible person in charge of the team at the time of the alleged infraction. A full explanation of the protest will be recorded by the official scorer and retained for reference. All such protests are to be immediately acted upon by the protest committee and before play is continued. If the decision of the protest committee is appealed to the State Athletic Committee, it must be done so in time for any action to be resolved prior to the next game of either team involved.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE XIII – YOUTH FOOTBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. There are nine age divisions for youth football. Participants must be 6 by the age control date: on September 1, current year.

<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>BALL CARRIER MAX WEIGHT</u>
6-7 Year Old	Unlimited
8 Year Old	Unlimited
8 & Under	100 lbs.
9 Year Old	Unlimited
10 Year Old	Unlimited
10 & Under	125 lbs.
11 Year Old	Unlimited
12 Year Old	Unlimited
12 & Under	150 lbs.

2. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions.
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
3. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, USA FOOTBALL.
4. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

SECTION B – ENTRIES

1. Any agency may enter as many teams as their district allows, provided the State Athletic Committee does not set a limit on the number.
2. Host agency will have the option of entering a host team in the state football tournament.
3. Districts may designate a roster deadline, if and only if, it conducts a season schedule. This deadline must be prior to the final scheduled district games.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS**SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES**

1. Youth football at all levels is governed by the current rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association Constitution and By-Laws and by the National Federation Edition of Football Rules for the current year, with exceptions as noted in this Manual. No electronic communication devices allowed.
2. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
3. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
4. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

1. A regulation game shall consist of four (4) 8-minute quarters.
 - a. Each team shall be allowed three (3) time outs per half.
 - b. Half-time shall consist of no more than 10 minutes.
2. GRPA State Play limits the number of football games per team to two games per day with a minimum of a 3 hour rest period between games. If extenuating circumstances exist, the state chair or designee must be notified.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS**There is no mandatory participation requirement for any GRPA sport.**

1. A team must have ten (10) players to start or continue a game. They can continue the game if the removed player leaves for any reason other than ejection. There is a roster limit of 30 players and once the roster has been submitted, it becomes official and no changes can be made. Teams should have records of all check-ins from district through state play. Team Book/Information should consist of GRPA roster with jersey numbers and birth certificates in alphabetical order.
2. **Traditional:** The maximum weight limit for any player to receive a hand-off or pass from scrimmage is 150 pounds (12U), and 125 pounds (10U) and 100 pounds (8U). Any player ineligible to carry the ball must wear a red stripe (unless a team has red helmets and then the stripe will be white) diagonally on the back of their helmet. Players who exceed the maximum weight are ineligible to run the ball.
 - a. Striped players must play as a down lineman and line up tackle to tackle on the line of scrimmage in a 3 or 4 point stance while on defense.

- b. Offensive line positions can be in a 2, 3, or 4 point stance and should be detailed as follows: T G C G T
3. Striped players on offense must be tackle to tackle as shown above.
4. There are no restrictions on unstriped players – see National Federation Rules.
 - a. Striped defensive linemen may not line up outside of the outside shoulder of the offensive tackles.
 - b. In the 8U division, a defensive player is not allowed to line up over the center. As a result of this rule, there will be no quarterback sneaks. The QB must be led by a running back if running up the middle. The QB may run outside the guards and there are no direct snaps to anyone other than the quarterback. The penalty for this infraction is the same as illegal formation.
 - c. Defensive linemen must be in a 3 or 4 point stance – any player tackle to tackle is considered a lineman on the line-of-scrimmage. Linebackers (tackle to tackle) must be off the line-of-scrimmage – depth must be the back of the farthest lineman position. The penalty for this infraction is the same as being off sides.
 - d. Coaches will be responsible for maintaining the stripes and making sure players are in the correct playing position. If lined up incorrectly, there will be a 5 yard penalty. **Players with striped helmets are eligible to punt and kick on kick-offs/field goal attempts.**
 - e. A player's weight is defined as that weight which is determined by approved or certified scales when the player weighed at their official weigh in. **No player will be allowed to totally strip for a weigh in and must have at least gym shorts on at all times.** Players should be in alphabetical order for weigh-ins and a coach should be present with their roster and birth certificates in alphabetical order, as well.
 - f. Weights shall be determined on digital scales or balance type scales, furnished by the Host team. Spring scales are not acceptable. Players shall weigh in at each level of play.
 - i. **The Official Weigh-in shall be conducted two hours prior to game time. Players not making the weight limit at the Official Weigh-in shall be permitted a second or alternate weigh-in conducted one hour prior to game time.**
 - ii. **Teams not desiring to weigh-in two hours prior to game time shall be permitted to weigh-in one hour prior to game time but no alternate Weigh-in will be allowed.**
 - iii. **Failure to meet the weight requirements at alternate Weigh-in shall constitute game ineligibility to carry/handle the ball.**
 - iv. Players absent from their first game must weigh in prior to any following or subsequent games. **All players must weigh in at all levels of GRPA play.** Once weight requirement has been met for that level of play, players will not be required to reweigh during the same level of play.
 1. Players attempting to make weight after district may reweigh at first game of state..
 2. Teams going straight to State must meet all weight requirements. ***If a player is found to have not weighed in, penalty for player and/or coach will be as follows: Penalty- EJECTION FROM FACILITY AND PLAYER EJECTION FOR THE REMAINDER OF TOURNAMENT.**
 - v. All players will be weighed regardless of position and the actual weight will be recorded on the official roster prior to the first game played AND weighed at each level of play. There are NO weight protests once an official weight is recorded at each level of GRPA play. If a player is deemed ineligible, as a result of removing or tampering with the stripe

placed on the helmet during weigh-in or failure to report jersey change in an attempt to be deceptive, the player and coach ejections and/or disqualification of team from tournament. Illegal participation, by a maximum weight player, during the game will result in the player being removed for minimum one game (4 quarters) suspension, and a minimum two games (8 quarters) suspension for the head coach.

All protests regarding rule interpretation must be made prior to the conclusion of the game. **If the player is found to be overweight at official weigh-in, they will be ineligible to carry or advance the ball in that game.** They may weigh in again for the next game. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTION TO READING OF OFFICIAL SCALES! **Any team(s) found utilizing ineligible players will be penalized either by player ejection and/or team forfeiting the game.**

5. **Mercy rule** – Beginning in the third quarter, if requested by the losing team's coach, or any time in the fourth quarter a team gains a 21-point lead the clock will run continuously for the balance of the game except after touchdowns and during timeouts, injuries, penalties and scores. If not elected in the third quarter it automatically occurs in the fourth quarter when a 21-point lead occurs. If the losing team gets within seven points, the clock will return to regulation.
6. The playing field shall be 100 yards in length for 10U and 12U, and 80 yards for 8U. Kick-offs will be from the 40-yard line in the 10U & 12U divisions. There will be no kick-offs in the 8U division. The ball will be placed on the 20 yard-line to begin play.

All kick-offs out-of-bounds will be placed on the 35 yard-line or at the point of the out-of-bounds whichever is greater. If the receiving team fumbles the kick-off out-of-bounds, the ball will be placed at that point.

Weight Clarification/Interpretation:

Players with striped helmets are eligible to play on kickoff and return team. They may also kick or punt and kick on kick-offs/field goal attempts. Please remember if this is not the scenario then the penalties outlined in the manual will still apply.

Striped players may recover a fumble or intercept the ball; however, they cannot advance the ball. Play is dead once recovery by a striped player occurs. If player attempts to run the ball, it will be spotted at point of intercept or recovery.

- a. All players whose names appear on the Official Roster must have met the weight requirement prior to the State Championship finals to be eligible to handle ball. **APPROVED RULING:** If one of the teams to play in a State Championship does not have a game within one week of the State Championship game, players shall be allowed to weigh for official purposes at the Official weigh in of the game in which the team's opponent for the Championship games is determined, or on that same day by a State Athletic Committee Member not associated with the team agency.

The offensive team must verbally state their intention of punting before leaving their huddle. After a verbal declaration of punting, the clock will stop until the change of possession. There will be **no punts in the 8U division**, the ball will be marked 30 yards from the line of scrimmage or half the distance from inside the 20-yard line by the referee. The ball cannot be spotted deeper than the 10- yard line. **10U division punts** will be a dead ball kick; all defensive players will take a knee during the kick except for one defensive punt receiver. The ball will be spotted where the receiver catches or controls the ball. All punts must be from long snapped formation. Delay of game can still be called even though punts are dead ball. In **12U division**, starts out as a dead ball and once the punter is in control of the snapped football the official blows the whistle and the play becomes live, the defense must have seven men on the line of scrimmage and two players whom cannot be no more than 5 yards off the line of scrimmage, this allows for two punt receivers for the punt return team.

The intent of the rule is to keep teams from developing a wedge prior to the ball becoming live, and to help aid in the realism of the punt return portion of the game. By rule, 12U division punts become live once the official whistles in that the punter has control of the snapped football, which at that moment makes the punt returnable or gives the opportunity for a blocked punt. **No fake punts will be allowed.**

7. All coaches are required to stay within the boundaries of the coaching box with noted exceptions in the 8U division – one coach is allowed in the huddle of the offensive and defensive team. Once the huddles are broken, the coaches are to back up at least 10-yards. Coaches on the field are not allowed to communicate/talk to their players after the huddle is broken (penalty is 5 yards). No coaches will be allowed on the field in the 9U, 10U and 12U Traditional and Unlimited divisions. The coaches' box extends from the 25-yard line to the 25-yard line. There is a limit of 5 coaches on the sideline and all 5 should have the same color shirt on.
8. The time allowed to snap the ball after it has been declared ready for play is 30 seconds. **In the 8U division, the football may be placed parallel to the line of scrimmage to assist in snapping the ball.**
9. **OVERTIME in the 8U division ONLY:** If a game ends in a tie, the 10-yard line overtime procedure will be used with the ball being placed on the 10-yard line with each team getting a series. 1st and 2nd Overtime will use 10 yard procedure and 3rd overtime the ball will be placed on the 3 yard line, each team will be given ONE play to score (no extra point attempts in 3rd OT or any successive OT periods).
10. **OVERTIME in the 10U and 12U divisions:** If a game ends in a tie, the 10-yard line overtime procedure will be used with the ball being placed on the 10-yard line with each team getting a series. 1st and 2nd Overtime will use 10 yard procedure and 3rd overtime or any successive OT periods, each team must attempt a two point conversion (kick).
11. Extra Points and Field Goals: **Players with striped helmets are eligible to punt and kick on kick- offs/field goal attempts.**
 - a. **8U Football**
 - i. 1 point for passing/running in the end zone from the 3 yd. line
 - ii. 2 points for passing/running in the end zone from the 5 yd. line
 - b. **10U Football**
 - i. 1 point for running or passing
 - ii. 2 points for kicking through the uprights
 - iii. (Dead Ball with no rush, defense can raise hands and try to block only – no jumping. The ball must be snapped to holder whom places on standard orange kicking tee and holder does not have to hold ball while ball is being kicked; in fact, kicker can actually adjust ball after being placed on kicking tee by holder). Ball would be placed and snapped on the regulation 3 yard line on a 100 yard field. On an 80 yard field, a snap would be from 13 yards off the face of the goal/uprights. Field Goal attempts have the same rule except team awarded 3 points.
 - c. **12U Football**
 - i. 1 point for running or passing
 - ii. 2 points for kicking through the uprights
 - iii. (Dead Ball with no rush, defense can raise hands and try to block only – no jumping. The ball must be snapped to holder who holds football on a kicking block or ground for

the extra point, once the official sees that the snapped ball is in place by the holder, the official blows the whistle and the kicker must immediately kick the extra point). Ball is placed on 3 yard line. Penalty is delay of game. Field Goal attempts – the same rule except team awarded 3 points.

UNLIMITED TACKLE FOOTBALL EXCEPTIONS

1. The playing field shall be 100 yards in length for 9U, 10U, 11U, and 12U divisions, and 80 yards for 7U and 8U divisions. Kick-offs will be from the 40 yard line for 9U, 10U, 11U and 12U divisions. There will be no kick-offs in the 7U or 8U division. The ball will be placed on the 20 yard-line to begin play.
2. Punts
 - a. 7U and 8U stay the same- 30 yard mark off.
 - b. 9U and 10U play as current 12U is written with begin as dead ball until official blows whistle.
 - c. 11U and 12U punts will be regulation punts according to GHSA.
 - d. Fake punts allowed in 11U & 12U.
3. All coaches are required to stay within the boundaries of the coaching box with noted exceptions in the 7U and 8U divisions – one coach is allowed in the huddle of the offensive and defensive team. Once the huddles are broken, the coaches are to back up at least 10-yards. Coaches on the field are not allowed to communicate/talk to their players after the huddle is broken (penalty is 5 yards). No coaches will be allowed on the field in the 10U and 12U Unlimited division. The coaches' box extends from the 25-yard line to the 25-yard line. There is a limit of 5 coaches on the sideline and all 5 should have the same color shirt on.
4. In the 7U and 8U divisions, a defensive player is not allowed to line up over the center. As a result of this rule, there will be no quarterback sneaks. The QB must be led by a running back if running up the middle. The QB may run outside the guards and there are no direct snaps to anyone other than the quarterback. The penalty for this infraction is the same as illegal formation.
5. 7U-10U divisions: Defensive linemen must be in a 3 or 4 point stance – any player tackle to tackle is considered a lineman on the line-of-scrimmage. Linebackers (tackle to tackle) must be off the line-of- scrimmage – depth must be the back of the farthest lineman position. The penalty for this infraction is the same as being off sides.
6. 11U and 12U divisions: No lineman or linebacker limitations.
7. Extra Points and Field Goals: **Players with striped helmets are eligible to punt and kick onkick-offs/field goal attempts**
8. 7U & 8U divisions: 2 points for field goal from 3 yard line
 - a. **8U Football**
 - i. 1 point for passing/running in the end zone from the 3 yd. line
 - ii. 2 points for passing/running in the end zone from the 5 yd. line
 - b. **10U Football**
 - i. 1 point for running or passing
 - ii. 2 points for kicking through the uprights
 - iii. (Dead Ball with no rush, defense can raise hands and try to block only – no jumping.

The ball must be snapped to holder whom places on standard orange kicking tee and holder does not have to hold ball while ball is being kicked; in fact, kicker can actually adjust ball after being placed on kicking tee by holder.) Ball would be placed and snapped on the regulation 3 yard line on a 100 yd. field. On an 80 yard field, a snap would be from

13 yards off the face of the goal/uprights. Field Goal attempts have the same rule except team awarded 3- points.

- c. **11U & 12U Football** – extra points are live
(Dead Ball with no rush, defense can raise hands and try to block only – no jumping. The ball must be snapped to holder who holds football on a kicking block or ground for the extra point, once the official sees that the snapped ball is in place by the holder; the official blows the whistle and the kicker must immediately kick the extra point.) Ball is placed on 3 yard line. Penalty is delay of game. Field Goal attempts - the same rule except team awarded 3-points.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Shoes are mandatory for play in youth football games.
 - a. Shoes which have plastic, nylon, hard rubber or other synthetic materials, and which have cleats which are detachable are not allowed.
 - b. Shoes with rubber-molded cleats are permissible, as are smooth, soft-sole shoes such as tennis or basketball shoes.
2. The approved footballs are as follows (teams may use their own ball as long as it meets the below specifications):
 - a. **12U**: Wilson TDY; Spaulding J2Y; McGregor MSJ; Rawlings KRB; Voit CF7S; Wilson F1544; or other youth size football.
 - b. **10U**: Wilson TDJ or any other **Junior** size football.
 - c. **8U**: Wilson K2 or equal
3. Game Balls – All game balls for each team that will be used for the game must be inspected by officials prior to the game and marked by officials. Use of any other ball that is not marked appropriately will be considered illegal equipment. If the illegal equipment (game ball) is:
 - a. **DISCOVERED PRIOR TO THE NEXT DOWN/PLAY**, the down/play should be REPLAYED and the team flagged for unsportsmanlike conduct with a 15 yard penalty assessed (if the coach/team defers to the result of the play, the penalty will be assessed on the next down) and the illegal equipment removed from the game.
 - b. Is discovered after the play but **NOT BEFORE** the next down/snap/play the team will be assessed an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty of 15 yards and the illegal ball/equipment removed from the game. The **result of the play stands and will not be replayed** if discovered after the next play/down has occurred.
 - c. Second offense by the offending team will be assessed a 15 yard unsportsmanlike penalty and the coach ejected from the game. NOTE: THE SIT OUT RULE WILL BE IN EFFECT.
 - d. Third offense of using an illegal football will result in forfeiting the game and being disqualified.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. A uniform for youth football shall include helmet with face guard, 2 or 4 point chin strap snaps,

shoulder pads, football pants with pads protecting the hips, thighs and knees, and jersey with numerals on front and back (must be alike in style and base color, trim and script does not matter). It is mandatory that all players wear such uniforms. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment

- a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. (*EFFECTIVE January 2025*)
2. Mouth pieces must be worn by all players in the game and meet current GSHA requirements. They should be attached to the helmet and visible to the game officials.
3. GRPA waives the GHSA position numbering system requirements.
4. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - a. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach the bases must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.
5. The Host Agency shall be responsible for supplying scrimmage vests in events where jerseys need to be opposite colors. A coin toss shall be conducted and the winner shall have the option of whether to wear the scrimmage vests or original jerseys.

SECTION C – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. The playing field and surrounding immediate area shall be in accordance with the specifications of the GHSA rules.
2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for seeing that the playing field requirements meet the proper specifications.

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS

SECTION A – METHOD OF TEAM ENTRY

1. The State Athletic Bracket Committee will set the state-wide pairings after the Fall meeting (October). The State Committee may, at its opinion, restrict the number of entries from an agency. The agency must meet all eligibility requirements of a GRPA member.
2. The process of selecting finalists will be single-elimination.
3. The State finals of Class “A” “B” “C” will be awarded by bid process at State President’s Assembly.
4. Awards as determined by State Athletic Committee Bid. Team trophy for first, second, and individual medals for first and second place.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – HOST

1. The Host Agency shall provide a minimum number of competent adults to serve as a statistician, a play-off director, and approved game officials in accordance with Rule II Article IV. The statistician must be agreeable by both agencies playing the game prior to kickoff and he shall keep all necessary records for the game.
2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for proper conduct of spectators.
3. Teams may provide their own game ball as long as it meets GRPA specifications.

4. The Host Agency shall be responsible for seeing that the playing field requirements meet GRPA specifications.

SECTION B – GAME OFFICIALS

A minimum of four REGISTERED Game Officials (qualified game official with a certified officials' association acceptable by the Georgia High School Association and designated by GHSA Standards) shall be employed for State level GRPA competition. District levels must use at least three (3) Officials as stated in Rule II, Article IV, Section B1d.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

Exception: Weigh-ins would follow procedures listed herein.

RULE XIV (A) – YOUTH FLAG FOOTBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. There are four (4) age divisions for youth football. Participants must be 6 by the age control date: on September 1st, current year.

<u>GIRLS YOUTH</u>	<u>COED YOUTH</u>
8 & Under	8 & Under
10 & Under	10 & Under
12 & Under	12 & Under
14 & Under	14 & Under

2. All team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions.
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agencies must endorse participants.
 - f. Participants must be approved by the District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with the list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
3. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, GHSA, USA Football.
4. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. Games in youth flag football at all levels of play are governed by the current rules and regulations of the GHSA Constitution and By-laws and the NFHS Rulebook with the exceptions as may be found in this manual.
2. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
3. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

4. Definitions:

- a. **Screen Blocking** – Screen blocking is the legal act of obstructing an opponent's movement without making physical contact. All screen blocking shall be without physical contact by keeping the hands and arms across the chest or behind the back. Players shall not block by interlocking with a teammate. There shall be no moving screens by the offensive players beyond the line of scrimmage. Offensive players beyond the line may set a standing screen (similar to basketball) or may follow the play in the event of a backward lateral pass (pitch).
- b. **Diving** – A runner with the ball is not allowed to dive, but a receiver may jump or dive to catch a pass. Defensive players may jump or dive to defend a pass or to pull a flag.
- c. **Illegal Pass** – One (1) forward pass is allowed per play. An illegal forward pass is called if the passer's foot is beyond the line of scrimmage, a second forward pass is thrown, or if a forward pitch is attempted past the line of scrimmage. (Penalty is 5 yards from the spot of the foul and Loss of down). Intentional grounding is called if a player attempts a forward pass when there is no player in the area to receive the pass. The pass may be spiked to stop the clock inside of 2 minutes with no penalty.
- d. **Defensive Pass Interference** - Penalty is 10 yards from the previous spot. Automatic first down.
- e. **Offensive Pass Interference** - Penalty is 10 yards from the previous spot and loss of down.
- f. **Neutral Zone** - There will be a 3 yard neutral zone for the 8U & 10u age groups between the offense and defense. A 2 yard neutral zone for the 12u & 14u age groups. No player may cross into the neutral zone before the ball is snapped. The penalty is 5 yards on the offending team.
- g. **Illegal Contact** - Contact that displaces a player from their immediate area or causes the receiver to lose control of the ball. Penalty is 10 yards from the previous spot on the offending team.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES AND GAME MANAGEMENT

- 1. The length of the game shall be 40 minutes divided into 4 quarters of 10 minutes each, with a 5 minute halftime. The game will be played using a "running clock". The clock starts when the ball is legally snapped and will run continuously for the first 18 minutes of each unless there is a timeout of stoppage of play by the officials.
- 2. The game shall be played between 2 teams of (7) players each. Teams may start or finish the game with (6) players.
- 3. Each play will begin with the ball being snapped to the quarterback by the center either through their legs or to the side. The snap may not be a handoff and must be received a minimum of 2-yards behind the line of scrimmage.
- 4. All players are eligible to run the ball after the snap or receive a pass. Only one offensive player may be in motion at the time of the snap.
- 5. Each team shall have (3) timeouts per game and must be requested by the team captain or head coach. Any unused timeouts do not carry over into overtime.
- 6. On or near the 2 minute mark remaining in each half the referee will stop the clock and inform each team of the remaining time and timing changes during the last 2 minutes of each half. The clock will start on the snap following the two-minute warning.
- 7. During the final 2 minutes of each half the clock will stop for the following and resume on the snap of the next play. Incomplete pass, out of bounds, score and extra point attempt, team timeout, fair catch, penalty administration, referee timeout, touchback, and change of possession.

8. Playing time may be shortened by mutual agreement of both teams before the game or during halftime.
9. After the coin toss, the game will begin with the offense starting their possession from their own 14-yard line, 1st and line to gain. The offense has (4) downs to cross each 1st down line. There are (4) 20-yard zones. Each time a zone line is crossed the offense is awarded a first down, a touchdown if a team crosses the goal line.

10. Punting - A team may elect to punt the ball when on offense. The captain/coach must inform the referee of the team's selection to punt. All players must remain still until the ball is kicked by the punting team, a snap that hits the ground may be picked up and kicked by the offense. The punt may be picked up from the ground and returned by the receiving team after the kick, if the punt is dropped or touched the ball is dead at the spot.

11. SCORING

- a. Touchdowns shall be (6) points. Extra points shall be either 1, 2, or 3 points.
 - b. Teams have the option to attempt 1 point from the 3 yard line, 2 points from the 10 yard line or 3 points from the 15 yard line following a touchdown. Once the field captain has made the choice for the attempt, the ball will be placed at the requested distance. Once the ball is spotted a team cannot change their mind unless a timeout is taken before the attempt. The defense cannot score on an extra point try. The ball is dead on a change of possession of a PAT attempt.
 - c. A safety shall be 2 points. Following a safety or touchback the ball is spotted on the offense's own 14-yard line, 1st and line to gain.
 - d. Sportsmanship rule- If a team is leading by 19 or more points at the 2 minute mark of the second half, the game is officially finished.
12. For the 8U & 10U divisions only, teams are allowed to have one coach on the field while their team is on offense to help with calling offensive plays. The coach must remain 10 yards behind the offensive line of scrimmage. The on field coach is not allowed to communicate with the team once the team leaves the huddle or the team is at the line of scrimmage. The purpose of this rule is to help with play calls, not to coach kids during live ball play. Penalty- First Offense- Sideline warning/ Second Offense- 5 yard penalty, replay the down and the team loses the ability to have a coach on the playing field for the remainder of the game.
 13. In the event of a tie game at the end of regulation, the "OVERTIME" procedure shall be:
 - a. After a 3-minute intermission a coin-flip with the team captains and the referee shall be conducted in order to determine possession and direction to start the overtime period.
 - b. The winner of the coin-flip shall have the option to start on defense, offense, or direction. The loser of the coin-flip will have the choice of the remaining options.
 - c. Each team is entitled to 1 time-out per overtime period.
 - d. The offensive team (team A) will start from the opponent's 10 yard line and have 4 downs to score a touchdown followed by the opponent (Team B) having the same opportunity to score. If the score is still tied after 1 period of overtime, play will proceed to the 2nd overtime with 1st and goal from Team B's 5 yard line. In the second overtime Team B will be on offense first and Team A on defense. If the score is still tied after the 2nd overtime period, each team shall have one play from the try line of their choice (3, 10, or 15 yard line). The process will continue until a winner is

decided. In any overtime period when the defense secures possession, the ball is dead and the series is over. Teams will continue to alternate possession for each overtime period until a winner is determined.

14. The referee shall have the authority to correct all obvious timing errors, but they must be corrected before the ball becomes live after the error occurred.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Jersey's- The home team shall wear matching dark jerseys with contrasting numbers not less than 6 inches in height in the back. The visiting team shall wear white or light colored jerseys with contrasting numbers not less than 6 inches in height on the back. Jerseys must be able to be tucked in at all times.
Note: Referees may send off players who do not conform.
 - a. Approved Uniform: (1) Plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. *(Effective January 2025)*
2. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member's agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - a. Managers, coaches, or team scorers must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.
3. Headwear- Players may wear a knit stocking cap, elastic headband, or a cap without a bill. Players are not permitted to wear bandanas. A soft pliable and non-abrasive protective headgear is recommended.
4. Flag Belts- Each player shall wear a one-piece quick release belt, without any knots. The belt must have 3 flags at the waistline permanently attached with 1 flag on each side and 1 in the back. The flag should be of contrasting color to the player's jersey and the opponent's flags.
5. Pants/Shorts- Each player shall wear pants or shorts without pockets or belt loops. They shall be a different color than their flags.
6. Footwear may be turf shoes or rubber molded cleats. Any type of braces with metal must be covered and not exposed.
7. Mouthpieces are mandatory for all players and must cover all teeth.
8. Game Ball - 8u & 10u age groups will use the Pee Wee or K2 football: The 12u & 14u age groups will use the junior size or TDJ ball.
9. Illegal players Equipment penalty: 10 yards.

SECTION B – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIAL RULES

1. The field dimensions shall be 40 yards wide and 100 yards long. There will be (4) 20 yard zones with (2) 10 yard end zones.

2. An “X” will be placed at the 14 yard line from each end zone which will serve as the starting point for each team’s offensive possession after a score, safety, and the start of the 1st and 3rd quarters.
3. There will be a 1 yard long line at the 3 yard line which will serve at the 1 point line for PAT’s.
4. There will be a 1 yard lone line at the 10 yard line which will serve as the 2 point line for PAT’s.
5. There will be a 1 yard line at the 15 yard line which will serve as the 3 point line for PAT’s.
6. Each field should have yard markers and each zone line on at least one side of the field with pylons on both sidelines at the goal line and in the corners of each end zone.
7. An official down marker is to be used on the sideline opposite the press box placed at the line to signify which down it is during possessions.

NOTE: An official down marker “the down box” to be used by the team occupying the side opposite of the press-box. (NOTE- schools may use lacrosse lines on the synthetic turf fields)

ARTICLE IV – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – GAME OFFICIALS

1. No official who has played during the season in the host’s local league may officiate in the District or State tournament.
2. The games shall be regulated under the supervision of (3) GHSA registered contest officials.
 - a. Three (3) minutes prior to the start of each game both head coaches, team captains, and the officiating crew shall conduct a pre-game conference. It is the responsibility of each head coach to ensure their players are legally equipped and meet uniform standards. Each team shall designate a speaking captain to appropriately address the officials and request timeouts.

SECTION B – PLAYER AND COACH CONDUCT

1. Non-physical unsportsmanlike acts include but are not limited to; profanity, inappropriate gestures, taunting, disconcerting acts prior to the snap in an attempt to interfere with the offensive signals, disrespecting a game referee.
2. Physical unsporting acts include but are not limited to; kicking, striking, attempting to kick or strike an opponent, spiking the ball, illegal participation. NOTE: The penalty for any unsportsmanlike acts is 10 yards and the ejection from the game of the offending player or coach.

ARTICLE V – PROTESTS, APPEALS AND PENALTIES

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A

Flag guarding - 5 yards from spot of foul	Illegal Motion - 5 yards	Illegal forward pass - 5 yards from the spot (loss of down)
Delay of Game - 5 yards (30 sec play clock)	Offsides - 5 yards	Illegal Contact - 10 yards
Roughing the Passer - 10 yards (automatic 1st down)	Unsportsmanlike Conduct - 10 yards	Pass Interference - 10 yards (automatic 1st down)
Intentional grounding - spot foul and loss of down		

RULE XIV (B) – ADULT FLAG FOOTBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISION

Adults: Age 18 & over (age control date: on August 30, current year)

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. The accepted guide for GRPA tournament games, with the exceptions found in this manual, is the Official NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sports Association) printed in the current edition of the rules and official's manual.
2. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.
3. Per the "Return to Play Act of 2013", effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
4. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES AND GAME MANAGEMENT

1. A regulation game shall consist of 44 minutes, divided into two halves of 22 minutes each with the clock running. The clock will stop at the 2-minute mark of each half to announce the 2-minute warning. The clock will start again on the following snap. The first minute of the 2-minute warning will be a running clock and will only be stopped for injuries, timeouts, and scores. The clock will be stopped again at the 1-minute mark. The clock will be a regulation clock for the remainder of the half. The half time shall consist of 5 minutes. When overtime is used, there will be a 3-minute intermission. If a game ends in a tie, the 10 yard line overtime procedure will be used with the ball being placed on the 10 yard line with each team getting a series of 4 downs to score.
2. Games will be scheduled for the 2nd Saturday and Sunday of December. All games will be scheduled and start no later than 10:00 PM on Saturday nights but may be played in emergency situations (rain, game delay, etc.)
3. All GRPA district and state games must be played to conclusion. All NIRSA Mercy Rules apply for both Pool and Bracket Play; 19 points at 5 minutes.
4. State tournaments in Flag Football shall be Round Robin Pool Play as described in Rule XIV Article V Section A. Brackets and pool shall be drawn by the State Athletic Committee's Bracket committee.
5. All team members not actually participating in the game must stay within the confines of the team area as specified by host agency.
6. A minimum of three (3) registered officials are required for district and state level.

ARTICLE III – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

1. The judgment decision by an official on any play shall not be protested.
2. Protests on misinterpretation of the rules are allowed to the head referee. The Tournament Director shall

coordinate any such protest and shall serve as the odd-numbered member of the Tournament Protest Committee as determined prior to the game by the agency host in coordination with the district commissioner for district level competition and with the State Athletic Chair for state level competition. All such protests are to be immediately acted upon by the Protest Committee and before play is continued.

3. No protest on rule interpretation will be accepted after the next snap of the ball.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

ARTICLE IV – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Rubber-molded, cleated shoes are approved for use. Smooth and soft-soled athletic shoes including tennis shoes or basketball shoes are acceptable.
2. Balls – Host to furnish. Teams may furnish game balls “at the discretion of the host.”
3. Flags will be provided by host. Flags will be the triple threat or equivalent quality with three flags per belt.
4. Team uniforms for Flag Football will consist of matching or like-colored jerseys with factory-type non- duplicating numbers on the back at least six inches height. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. ***(EFFECTIVE January 2025)***
5. Illegal uniforms will be treated as illegal equipment.
6. Shorts or pants worn must be without pockets or belt loops.
7. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

SECTION B – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. The following field specifications are required for all games:
 - a. Adult Division:
 - i. Playing field shall be 40 yards wide and 100 yards long; four 20 yard sections and two 10 yard end zones. As specified in rule 1-2 NIRSA rule book.
 - ii. The agency host shall be responsible for seeing that the playing field meets GRPA and NIRSA specifications. Site selection committee may alter field dimensions as needed.

ARTICLE V – FLAG FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT FORMAT**SECTION A – ROUND ROBIN POOL/TIE BREAKER**

1. The top 2 teams from each three team round robin league will advance to the championship playoffs, which are single eliminations.
2. All forfeits will be governed by NIRSA rules. (See Section A, 4A.)
3. If a two-way tie exists, it will be decided by who beats whom in head-to-head competition.
4. If a three-way tie exists, it will be decided as follows:
 - a. Forfeit – a team that forfeits is dropped to the lowest possible play among the three tied teams. Plus a forfeit fee (during pool play) of \$750.00 payable to host.
 - b. The difference between total points scored versus total points allowed. For example, A defeated B 7-0, B defeated C 7-6, and C defeated A 13-6.

Team A		Team B		Team C	
7	0	0	7	6	7
<u>6</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>6</u>
13	13	7	13	19	13
Diff = 0		Diff = -6		Diff = +6	

5. Thus, team C finishes first, team A finishes second and team B does not qualify.
 - a. If two teams have the same point differential, then who beat them in head-to-head competition will determine playoff placement.
 - b. If two teams have scored the same number of points, then head-to-head competition will determine playoff placement.
 - c. If all three have scored the same number of points, then the fewest points allowed will determine playoff placement.
 - d. If two teams have allowed the same number of points, then head-to-head competition will determine playoff placement.
 - e. If all three teams have allowed the same number of points, then the following procedure will be used.
 - i. The three teams will play a round robin (A vs. B, B vs. C, and C vs. A) tournament using the NIRSA National Collegiate Flag Football Rulebook Tie game procedure (Rule 3-2-5).
 - ii. Win-loss record, then point differential, points scored and points allowed (see items B-G above) will determine playoff placement.
 - iii. If a tie still exists, a coin toss will be held with the odd team being eliminated.
6. The host will post all results as soon as possible so all teams will know in advance who will play whom in the final single elimination round.

RULE XV – YOUTH CHEERLEADING

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

Participants must be 6 by the age control date: on September 1, current year.

1. There are four age divisions for cheerleading:
 - a. 8 & Under
 - b. 10 & Under
 - c. 12 & Under
 - d. 14 & Under
2. Allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home county or agency has no program.
 - b. No recruiting by the adjoining agency.
 - c. Cannot cross district lines.
 - d. Host agency endorsed participants.
 - e. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - f. Must participate in the sport program in the Host agency program.
 - g. If you live in an “A” class county, you cannot compete in “B” or “C” county. Must compete in nearest “A” county. “B” or “C” may compete with “A”.
 - h. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with the list and home county of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
 - i. Participants must be approved by the District Athletic Chair and any and all protests of crossovers must be done prior to district competition. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
3. Youth coaches must be certified by one of the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, or GHSA.
4. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. GRPA meets are governed by the current rules and regulations set by the National Federation Spirit Rules Book and the GHSA Competitive Cheerleading Manual minus the exceptions as may be stated in this manual.
2. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
3. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing

the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – SPECIAL RULES

1. Cheerleading is a sport in each classification.
2. All cheerleading competitions must be conducted according to the rules of the “National Federation Spirit Rules Book” and the “GHSA Competitive Cheerleading Manual.”
3. NOTE: National Federation rules dealing with safety are to be followed in any cheerleading practice or performance. It is recommended, but not mandatory, that cheerleaders practice stunts on one or more 6'x42' cheerleading mats prior to performing stunts in a team routine.
4. A competitive cheerleading team is comprised of a maximum of sixteen performers.
 - a. A team mascot (if used) is included as one of the sixteen performers.
 - b. A department may have a roster greater than sixteen performers, and may use any combination of eligible cheerleaders in any competition in each specific division.
 - c. All team members must be dressed in the adopted uniform that displays the department identification (i.e., letter, monogram, mascot symbol, etc.). EXCEPTION: The mascot is exempt from this rule.
5. The competitive area is a 42'x42' blue cheerleading mat, and the routine must be performed within the boundaries of the competitive area.
 - a. A full set of cheerleading mats (42'x42') must be used in all competitions.
 - b. Only coaches, competitors, and officials are allowed in the competitive area.
 - c. Only team members may act as spotters.
 - d. Non-competitors may not assist during the routine.
 - e. All mats should be placed on the floor horizontally facing the judges. Center of the mat should be marked with tape. The floor will be considered out-of-bounds.
6. The competitive routine must include both cheer and dance.
 - a. Tumbling skills are permitted only within the body of the routine.
 - b. Tumbling skills may not be performed as a part of the entrance to or exit from the competitive area.
 - c. Pom-poms are the only props allowed in a competitive routine.
7. The length of the routine shall be a maximum of two minutes and thirty seconds (2:30) for the 12u and 14U divisions and two minutes (2:00) for the 8U and 10U divisions, timed by an official timer.
 - a. The routine must begin within thirty seconds of the head judge's signal. Failure to do so shall result in a five-point deduction for delay of the meet.
 - b. Teams may begin from any position inbounds, and the time of the routine will begin with the first word, musical sound, or movement of any team member.
 - c. The routine ends on the last word, musical sound, or movement of any team member.
 - d. If the routine ends with a pyramid, the final dismount is not timed.
 - e. There is no minimum/maximum time limit for music in the routine.

- f. If the routine is longer than the allotted time, a deduction of five points for every fifteen second period or portion thereof will be assessed.
8. Each team is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the music in its routine.
- The Director must review the music to be used in the department's routine, and must stipulate that the music is in good taste for children and acceptable for the morals of their community.
 - Each department must furnish a high-quality tape/CD of their music.
9. NOTE: It is recommended that each department bring an identical back-up tape/CD.
- The coach or team representative is responsible for starting and stopping the music during the competition.
 - Departments are responsible for furnishing their own equipment and music for use in the practice/warm-up area.
10. Competitive routines shall be judged according to the following criteria:

CHEERLEADING FUNDAMENTALS			
<u>Jumps</u>		<u>Pyramids/Tosses</u>	
Degree of Difficulty	5 points	Degree of Difficulty	7 points
Execution	7 points	Execution	10 points
<u>Standing Tumbling</u>		Dance	10 points
Degree of Difficulty	5 points	<u>Partner Stunts</u>	
Execution	7 points	Degree of Difficulty	7 points
<u>Running Tumbling</u>		Execution	10 points
Degree of Difficulty	5 points	Cheer/Chant	10 points
Execution	7 points	Formations/Transitions	5 points
		Showmanship	5 points
Deductions will be made for the following:			
NFHS Rules Violations (minor)	-5 points		
NFHS Rules Violations (major)	-10 points		
Sportsmanship		-10 points	
Improper uniforms		-5 points	
Falls		-5 points	
Tumbling outside of the Routine		-5 points	
Boundary violations		-5 points	
Delay of meet		-5 points	
Time infractions (overtime)		-5 points for each 15 seconds or portion thereof	
Disqualifications will be made for the following:			
Illegal substitution (ineligible member or non-team member)			
Too many members on a competitive squad			
Unauthorized props			

11. Winners in the competitions will be determined by the highest point total from the judges after the highest score and the lowest score have been dropped.
- In case of a tie, all judges' scores will be totaled.
 - If a tie remains after all scores have been totaled, all judges will determine the ranking of the

tied teams to break the tie.

12. Prior to any disqualification for a rules violation, the Head Judge must call a conference at the conclusion of competition, and the majority of the judges must agree the violation occurred.
13. In all competitions, all judges must be registered with the GHSA and must have completed the GHSA training program.
 - a. A minimum of five judges and two safety judges will be used at all competitions, plus scorers and timer.
 - b. Judges must be secured by certified school personnel by contacting the assigning officer of a local judges' association.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Shoes are mandatory for all cheerleading events.
2. Equipment to be provided by the Host Agency for GRPA Cheerleading competitions shall include the following:
 - a. Scorer's table located in an area favorable to the officials and conducive to accurate and timely observation. It is recommended that a loud public address system be available.
 - b. At least one 42' X 42' blue cheerleading mat (preferably one additional for warm-up).

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Team members should wear like-uniforms. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. ***(EFFECTIVE January 2025)***
2. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

3. It is mandatory that team members be in uniform while actually competing in events.
4. No jewelry is allowed.

SECTION C – AREA REQUIREMENTS

1. Ample spectator seating should be provided for the event.
2. Locker rooms should be provided for changing.

ARTICLE IV – MEETS AND AWARDS

SECTION A – STATE

State championships will be held one weekend after the GHSA state championships in November.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS***SECTION A – HOST***

Attendants, coaches, spectators, parents or persons not designated as meet officials shall not accompany a competitor to the mat. Any team will be disqualified if, in the opinion of the judges or meet officials, they have in any way been aided by a coach, teammate or anyone connected directly or indirectly with the team concerned.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

Protests and appeals are authorized only under the stipulations found in this manual. For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE XVI – YOUTH LACROSSE

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

1. There are ten divisions of play. Participants must be 6 by the age control date: on September 1, current year.
2. The divisions are:

<u>GIRLS</u>	<u>BOYS</u>
8 & Under	8 & Under
10 & Under	10 & Under
12 & Under	12 & Under
14 & Under	14 & Under
17 & Under	17 & Under

3. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agencies must endorse participants.
 - f. Participants must be approved by the District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with the list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.
4. A participant is allowed to compete in either women's or men's divisions in addition to the co-ed division.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. The accepted guide for all levels is governed by the current rules and regulations of US Lacrosse; the national governing body of lacrosse with the exceptions found in this manual. The national governing body rules can be found at the following web address - http://www.uslacrosse.org/the_sport/rules.phtml.
2. Any player or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.
3. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
4. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing

the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.

5. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

1. 17U and 14U — Four 10-minute stop-time quarters. In the event of a tie, two 4-minute “sudden victory” overtime periods will be played. If after two overtime periods the score is still tied, additional sudden- victory overtime periods may be played until a winner is determined (provided time permits and coaches and officials are in agreement).
2. 8U and 10U — Four 12-minute running-time quarters. In the event of a tie, one 15-minute running- time overtime period will be played, with the team in the lead at the end of the overtime declared the winner. This is not a sudden victory period. If the score is still tied at the end of the overtime period, the game will end as a tie.

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

All special provisions are found in the US Lacrosse rules.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

Approved equipment is found in the US Lacrosse rules.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Team uniform will consist of matching or like colored jerseys with a factory-type non-duplicating number on the back at least six inches in height. It is strongly recommended that all team personnel be attired alike. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment.
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. ***(EFFECTIVE January 2025)***
2. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - a. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach the bases must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

SECTION C – FIELD REQUIREMENTS

Field requirements are found in the US Lacrosse Rules. Any changes must be approved by the State Athletic Chair.

ARTICLE IV – GAMES AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

District level competition in all divisions of Lacrosse is to be completed by the second weekend in May.

SECTION B – STATE

All divisions will begin the next weekend (3rd weekend in May) unless it falls on a holiday weekend (must be approved by the State Athletic Committee.)

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS***SECTION A – HOST***

1. Host Agency shall provide a minimum number of competent adults for scorers, Tournament Director, and a minimum of two registered officials.
2. The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing all match related supplies.

SECTION B – GAME OFFICIALS

A minimum of two REGISTERED officials shall be used in district and state level GRPA competition. All officials should be either REGISTERED or in the process of certification.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS***SECTION A – PROTESTS AND RULES INFRACTIONS***

1. The judgment decision by an official on any play shall not be protested.
2. Protest on misinterpretation of the rules are allowed to the referee and if accepted as valid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any such protest and shall serve as the odd-numbered member of the Tournament Protest Committee as determined prior to the game by the Agency Host in coordination with the District Commissioner for District level competition and with the State Athletic Committee Chair for State levels of competition. If a protest is accepted by the Tournament Director, it must be made by the certified coach or certified staff in charge of the team at the time of the alleged infraction. A full explanation will be given by the protest committee before play is continued. If the decision of the protest committee is appealed to the State Athletic Committee, it must be done so in time for any action to be resolved prior to the next game in which either team is involved.
3. No protest on rules interpretation will be accepted after play continues following the alleged infraction.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE XVII - YOUTH AND ADULT PICKLEBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE/SKILL DIVISIONS

1. There are 6 age divisions for competition in pickleball. Participants must be 14 by the age control date: on December 31, current year. The age divisions are as follows:
 - a. 14 – 29
 - b. 30 – 39
 - c. 40 – 49
 - d. 50 – 59
 - e. 60 – 69
 - f. 70+
2. There are 5 divisions for competition in pickleball: Women's Doubles, Men's Doubles, Mixed Doubles, Men's Singles, & Women's Singles.
 - a. Each division has 7 skill levels: 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0+, 5.5, and 6.0.
 - b. All divisions are open invitational for state of Georgia residents only. Players can represent any agency, but can only represent ONE district/agency.
3. Any player ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected: or, in the case of an individual event within a match, for the duration of that event.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

1. GRPA Pickleball tournaments shall be governed by current rules and regulations of the United States of America Pickleball Association (USAPA); <https://usapickleball.org/docs/ifp/USA-Pickleball-Rulebook.pdf>.
2. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
3. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
4. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – EVENTS

1. Events in GRPA pickleball tournaments shall have divisions for male/female in the following competition format: All divisions: Doubles and/or Singles competition.
2. The tournament hosts with the approval of the State Athletic Committee shall determine the brackets and times for all matches.

3. The tournament host will enter entries into www.pickleballtournaments.com and make available for player access. The host is allowed to charge a \$2.00 fee per registered player for the use of the website. Pairings and reports will be available through the website.

SECTION C - SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. The following will apply to the competition:
 - a. All matches will be round robin.
 - b. Match format will be determined by the number of players and teams that are represented in a particular bracket.
 - i. If only two teams are in a bracket, each team plays each opponent three times to 15 points, win by 1 point (state tournament only – in district, both teams will advance to the next level without competing).
 - ii. If three teams are in a bracket, each team plays each opponent three times to 11 points, win by 1 point.
 - iii. If four teams are in a bracket, each team plays each opponent two times to 11 points, win by 1 point.
 - iv. If five teams are in a bracket, each team plays each opponent one time to 11 points, win by 1 point.
 - v. If there are six, seven, or eight teams in a bracket, each team plays each opponent to 11 points, win by 1 point.
 - vi. If there are more than eight teams in a bracket, the event will be split into two brackets of fewer than eight teams, subject to the formats listed above.
2. Any ties in points will be decided by:
 - a. Total Wins
 - b. Head to Head competition.
 - c. Points Scored.
3. Age levels may be combined at the tournament director's discretion depending on the number of participants in age and skill brackets. The state championship tournament director will have administrative flexibility in this matter.
4. The Serve (USAPA Rules)
 - a. The serve must be made underhand.
 - b. Paddle contact with the ball must be below the server's waist (navel level).
 - c. The serve is initiated with at least one foot behind the baseline; neither foot may contact the baseline or court until after the ball is struck.
 - d. The serve is made diagonally crosscourt and must land within the confines of the opposite diagonal court.
 - e. Only one serve attempt is allowed, except in the event of a let (the ball touches the net on the serve and lands on the proper service court; let serves are replayed).
 - f. Service Sequence:
 - i. At the beginning of each new game only one partner on the serving team has the opportunity to serve before faulting, after which the service passes to the receiving

team.

- ii. Both players on the serving doubles team have the opportunity to serve and score points until they commit a fault *(except for the first service sequence of each new game).
- iii. The first serve of each side-out is made from the right-hand court.
- iv. If a point is scored, the server switches sides and the server initiates the next serve from the left-hand court.
- v. As subsequent points are scored, the server continues switching back and forth until a fault is committed and the first server loses the serve.
- vi. When the first server loses the serve the partner then serves from their correct side of the court (except for the first service sequence of the game*).
- vii. The second server continues serving until his team commits a fault and loses the serve to the opposing team.
- viii. Once the service goes to the opposition (at side out), the first serve is from the right-hand court and both players on that team have the opportunity to serve and score points until their team commits two faults.
- ix. In singles, the server serves from the right-hand court when his or her score is even and from the left when the score is odd.

g. Double-Bounce Rule

- i. When the ball is served, the receiving team must let it bounce before returning, and then the serving team must let it bounce before returning, thus two bounces. After the ball has bounced once in each team's court, both teams may either volley the ball (hit the ball before it bounces) or play it off a bounce (ground stroke).
- ii. The double bounce rule eliminates the serve and volley advantage and extends rallies.

5. Scoring (USAPA Rules)

- a. Points are scored only by the serving team.
- b. Games are normally played to 11 points, win by 2.
- c. Tournament games may be to 15 or 21, win by 2.
- d. When the serving team's score is even (0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10) the player who was the first server in the game for that team will be in the right-side court when serving or receiving; when odd (1, 3, 5, 7, 9) that player will be in the left-side court when serving or receiving.
- e. Non-Volley Zone
 - i. The non-volley zone is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net.
 - ii. Volleying is prohibited within the non-volley zone. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the zone.
 - iii. It is a fault if, when volleying a ball, the player steps on the non-volley zone, including the line and/or when the player's momentum causes them or anything they are wearing or carrying to touch the non-volley zone including the associated lines.
 - iv. It is a fault if, after volleying, a player is carried by momentum into or touches the non-volley zone, even if the volleyed ball is declared dead before this happens.
 - v. A player may legally be in the non-volley zone any time other than when volleying a ball.

- vi. The non-volley zone is commonly referred to as “the kitchen.”
- f. Line Calls
 - i. A ball contacting any line, except the non-volley zone line on a serve, is considered “in.”
 - ii. A serve contacting the non-volley zone line is short and a fault.
- g. Faults
 - i. A fault is any action that stops play because of a rule violation.
 - ii. A fault by the receiving team results in a point for the serving team.
 - iii. A fault by the serving team results in the server’s loss of serve or side out.
 - iv. A fault occurs when:
 - 1. A serve does not land within the confines of the receiving court.
 - 2. The ball is hit into the net on the serve or any return.
 - 3. The ball is volleyed before a bounce has occurred on each side.
 - 4. The ball is hit out of bounds.
 - 5. A ball is volleyed from the non-volley zone.
 - 6. A ball bounces twice before being struck by the receiver.
 - 7. A player, player’s clothing, or any part of a player’s paddle touches the net or the net post when the ball is in play.
 - 8. There is a violation of a service rule.
 - 9. A ball in play strikes a player or anything the player is wearing or carrying.
 - 10. A ball in play strikes any permanent object before bouncing on the court.
- 6. **Determining Serving Team (USAPA Rules):** Players use a coin toss to determine who will serve first. The winner of the coin toss will have the option to choose a side or to serve or receive.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

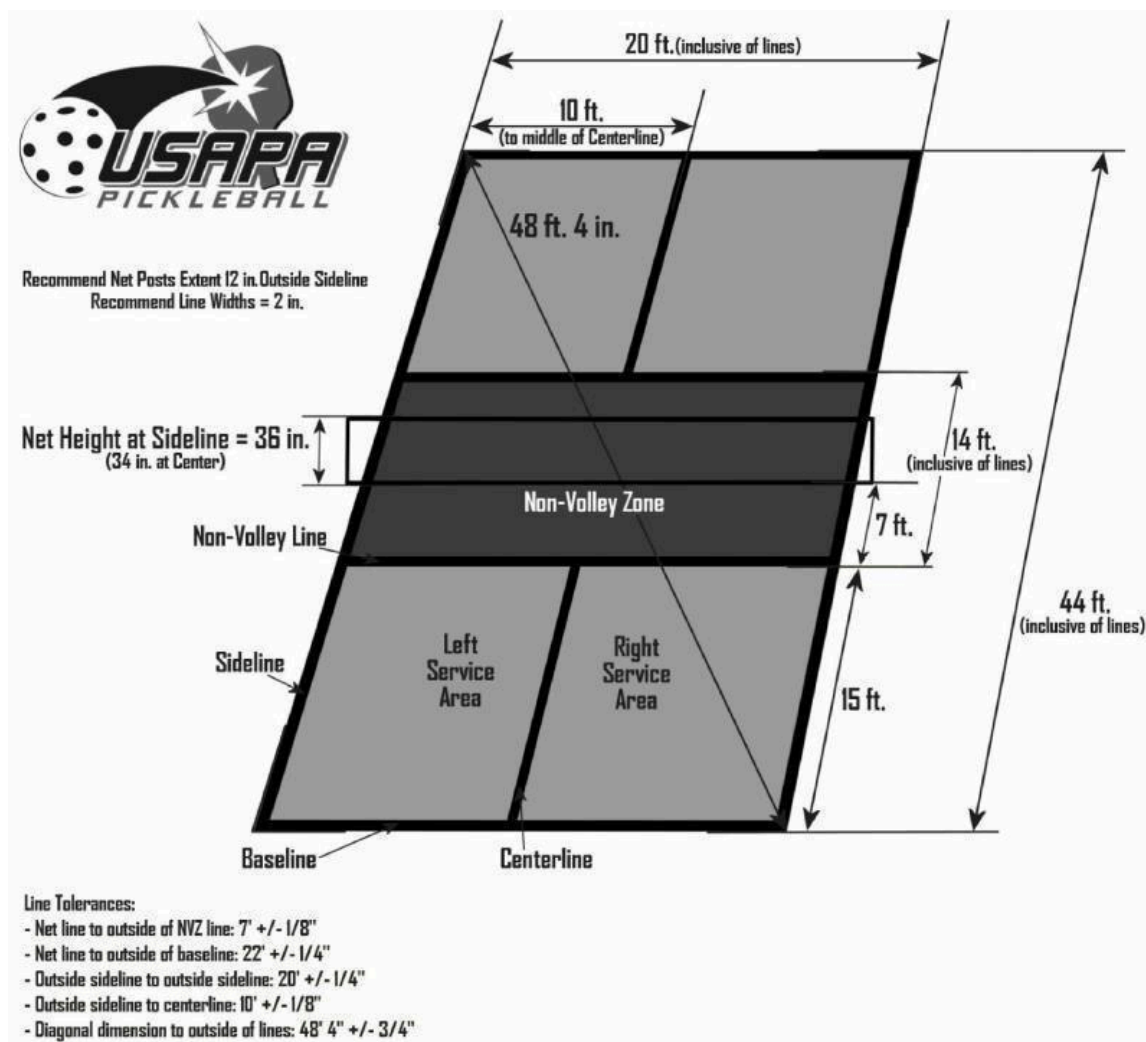
SECTION A - APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Equipment to be provided by the host agency for GRPA pickleball tournaments shall include the following:
 - a. Scorer's table located in an area favorable to the tournament officials and conducive to accurate and timely recording of results and posting scores. It is recommended that an information table near the scorer's table and loud speaker public address system be made available.
 - b. Paddles approved by USAPA must be used.
 - c. Balls approved for tournament use by USAPA must be provided by the host. Host must note the brand and type of ball that will be used on the tournament flyer. Indoor balls for an indoor tournament and outdoor balls for an outdoor tournament.
2. Team uniform must comply with USAPA rules
3. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.

Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

a.

SECTION B – PLAYING COURT



ARTICLE IV – TOURNAMENT AND AWARDS

SECTION A - DISTRICT

1. Each district shall have the right to conduct its own pickleball tournament in a manner approved by the majority of the participating district agencies and provided any exceptions to the rules in this manual are approved by a district's State Athletic Committee Member. District or host agencies are responsible for all district awards.
2. 2 medals will be given in each age/skill division; Gold Medal for State Champion and Silver Medal for State Runner-Up. For a combined age/skill division medals will be given **ONLY** for that combined division.

SECTION B - STATE

1. All state pickleball tournaments shall be set by the State Host.
2. Any revision of dates must be approved by the State Athletic Committee Chair.
3. Each district's Tournament Director is responsible for submitting state entries to be in the hands of the state host fourteen (14) days prior to the state tournament. Failure to meet this shall result in DISTRICT DISQUALIFICATION from the state tournament.
4. Entries shall consist of the following:

Example:

First & Last Name, Agency Representing District, Age, Division, Gender

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS

SECTION A - OFFICIALS

Members of the State Athletic Committee shall serve as the Tournament Committee (Jury of Appeals) and the Chair shall serve as Associate Tournament Director for the state tournament. Each District Commissioner is encouraged to provide a similar authority for district tournaments.

SECTION B - COMPETITORS AND ATTENDANTS

USAPA rules regarding the conduct of players and spectators to include language, throwing or slamming equipment, slow play, cheating, gambling, drinking, and flagrant violations will be adhered to.

ARTICLE VI – DEFAULTS

Any default will result in that agency being fined \$10.00 per person and any participant that withdraws from State competition will be suspended from GRPA pickleball competition for one year.

ARTICLE VII – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

Protests and appeals are authorized only under stipulation found in this manual.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE XVIII – ADULT KICKBALL

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISIONS

1. For Adults: 18 & over (age on September 1, current year)
2. Three divisions:
 - a. Men's
 - b. Women's
 - c. Coed

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

GRPA Kickball tournaments shall be governed by current rules and regulations of the World Adult Kickball Association (WAKA). See www.kickball.com for more information.

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1. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
2. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.
3. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF GAMES

1. REGULATION GAMES

- a. Regulation games last five (5) innings.
 - i. In the event of a tie score at the end of the game, the game shall be marked as a tie.
 - ii. If the home team already leads the game when the bottom of the final inning is reached, that team wins the game instantly and the game is over.
 - iii. If the home team takes the lead during the bottom of the final inning, that team wins instantly, and the game is over
2. A game that is called off by the referee after three (3) full innings of play shall be considered a regulation game. The game score at the end of the last full inning shall determine the winner. Regulation games called off that end in a tie shall be marked as a tie.
3. A game that is called off by the referee for any reason before three (3) full innings of play shall not be considered a regulation game and a new game may be rescheduled

SECTION C - SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. Games are played with 11 fielders, 5 innings, 2 base coaches.
2. Balls must be pitched by hand. There are no restrictions on pitching style.
3. BASE COACHES – Two members of the team at kick may coach first and third base, switching as needed with other team members to remain in the proper written kicking order.
4. INJURY AND SUBSTITUTIONS
 - a. In cases of injury or illness, a timeout may be requested for participant removal and replacement with a teammate as a substitute. If the participant later returns to play, the participant must be inserted in the same written kicking order position previously held.
 - b. If a player is ejected, injured, becomes ill and cannot continue, or leaves the game for any reason, the written kicking order will continue in the same formation, less the removed player. A player removed from the kicking order for ejection, injury, illness, or any reason does not constitute an improper kicking order and there is no “automatic out” when the removed player’s spot in the order is reached.
 - c. Any player removed from the game for injury or illness must be noted on both team written kicking orders and mentioned to the head referee.
 - d. The pitcher and the catcher positions may only be replaced once per inning each, unless injury forces another substitution.
 - e. Only runners who are injured while traveling to a base, and who successfully make it to a base, may be substituted. There are no other allowable runner substitutions. A runner may be substituted no more than twice during the game. Upon the second substitution, the player will be removed from the game and no longer be allowed to participate.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A - APPROVED EQUIPMENT

The official kickball is the red WAKA Logo Kickball, measuring 10 inches in diameter when properly inflated to a pressure of 1.5 pounds per square inch.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. While participating, players must properly wear the official athletic clothing designated for their use.
2. Athletic shoes are required. Metal cleats are not allowed.
3. Players may wear protective equipment providing it does not offer the wearer an unfair performance

advantage. Any equipment deemed by the head referee as a performance enhancement must be removed or the player will be removed from play.

4. All player attire is an extension of the player.
5. Team uniform will consist of matching or like colored jerseys with a factory-type non-duplicating number on the back at least six (6) inches in height. It is strongly recommended that all team personnel be attired alike. The basic body color determines matching jerseys. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment.
 - a. Approved uniform: (1) plain shirts with numbers, (2) agency name or agency abbreviation, or (3) agency logo with department/school mascot name. (*EFFECTIVE January 2025*)
6. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.
 - a. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach the bases must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

SECTION C – PLAYING FIELD REQUIREMENTS

1. The field shall be established on any safe terrain suitable for play in accordance with the following provisions which equal the dimensions of a softball field (see Diagram 2):
 - a. The kickball diamond is a square with equal sides of 60 feet or about 20 paces with a base at each corner.
 - b. The distance from home plate to second base and from first base to third base is 84 feet 10 1/4 inches or about 28 paces. The distance between any base and home plate shall be measured from the back corner of each.
 - c. The pitching strip is in the center of the diamond, 42 feet 5 1/8 inches or about 14 paces from home plate, and directly aligned with the 1st•3rd base diagonal.
 - d. The pitching mound extends 12 feet from the center of the pitching strip.
 - e. The sidelines are lines 10 feet on the outside of and parallel to the foul lines, the area between the foul lines and the sidelines is the sideline area.
 - f. When available, cones are placed:
 - i. at the outside corner of first, second, and third base, and not touching the base
 - ii. on the foul lines 30 feet or about 10 paces behind first and third base
 - iii. on the sidelines 10' from home plate.
 - g. The kicking box is a rectangle with the front of the box aligned with the front of home plate and the back of the box aligned with the sideline cones behind home plate. Lines extending forward from the sideline cones perpendicular to the front of home plate make up the sides of the kicking box. The area directly forward the kicking box is fair territory (see Diagram 2). The kicker is not required to start in the kicking box, however the kick must occur within the kicking box.
 - h. Foul lines are fair territory.
2. The strike zone is a three-dimensional irregular pentagon based on the shape of home plate and is one foot in height. The front of the zone aligns with the front of home plate. The sides of the zone

extend one foot to either side of the plate. The back edges of the zone are one foot from the back sides of the plate (see Diagram 4). The strike zone may not be marked by cones or other raised objects.

3. All participants must respect and obey all rules and regulations pertaining to the field used for games.
4. Any player or referee wholly or partly in fair territory is an extension of fair territory. Any live base runner outside the kicking box is fair, even when wholly in foul territory. A player jumping from fair territory is in fair territory while in the air. A player in foul territory does not extend foul territory by jumping or reaching into fair territory.
5. Upon notification to the head referee of any improper field set up, the field layout shall be corrected before the beginning of the next play. Protest based on field set up will not be considered.
6. Optional extra base: When available, an additional base may be set up adjacent to first base to provide more room for the runner (see Diagram 5).
 - a. The Extra Base is only available for runners traveling from home plate.
 - b. Fielders trying to make an out on first base must touch the base in fair territory (the first base). Runners hindered by a fielder touching the base in foul territory (the extra base), will be safe.
 - c. When a play is attempted at first base, a runner who touches the first base prior to being called safe at the extra base shall be called out, except under the exception (see 6f and 6g below).
 - d. Once a runner has reached first base safely, the runner must start the next play on the first base. Any runner standing on or touching the extra base at the beginning of the next play will be out;
 - e. No additional base may be used at any other base.
 - f. The runner is permitted to use the first base if avoiding collision with a fielder in foul territory. In this event, the fielder in foul territory is permitted to tag the extra base.
 - g. The runner may use first base if attempting to advance to second base, or if there is no fielder on first base. A runner using or touching first base in any other circumstance is out.
7. Sideline area: Prior to the kick, no participants (or spectators) may be in the sideline area (see Diagram 2) except for the kicker, referees and designated base coaches. After the kick, fielders and base runners in the process of playing the game may also occupy the sideline area.
 - a. The first infraction of this rule will result in a warning to the team that caused the infraction
 - b. The second and each subsequent infraction will result in an out for the next kicker in the written kicking order on the team that caused the infraction.

ARTICLE IV – TOURNAMENT AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT AND STATE

Host must provide tournament balls. Teams can use their own WAKA ball pending tournament host approval.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS

SECTION A – OFFICIALS

1. Games must be officiated by at least one authorized official, the Head Referee. When available, at least two officials referee each game: a Head Referee, and a First Base Referee. The Head Referee governs

all game play and issues all final rulings, and has final authority on equipment issues. Other Referees may assist these officials when available.

2. Prior to each game, the Head Referee must conduct a meeting with the Captains of each team, to address any ground rules in effect, to ensure the exchange of team lineups, and to identify the designated Captains who will be authorized to discuss calls with the Referees during the game.
3. Referees have jurisdiction over play and may:
 - a. Call a time out.
 - b. Call off a game due to darkness, rain or other cause at the Referee's discretion.
 - c. Penalize a player, including game ejection, for any reason. This includes but is not limited to unsportsmanlike conduct, fighting, delay of game and excessive verbal abuse. Ejected participants must leave the field area and may not return to the game.
4. Referees have jurisdiction over play and must:
 - a. Cancel the game if lightning is seen, or delay it until safe to continue.
 - b. Keep a record of the final game score.
5. Referees may make rulings on any points not specifically covered in the rules (at the time of occurrence), but the ruling shall not be deemed as a precedent for future rulings.

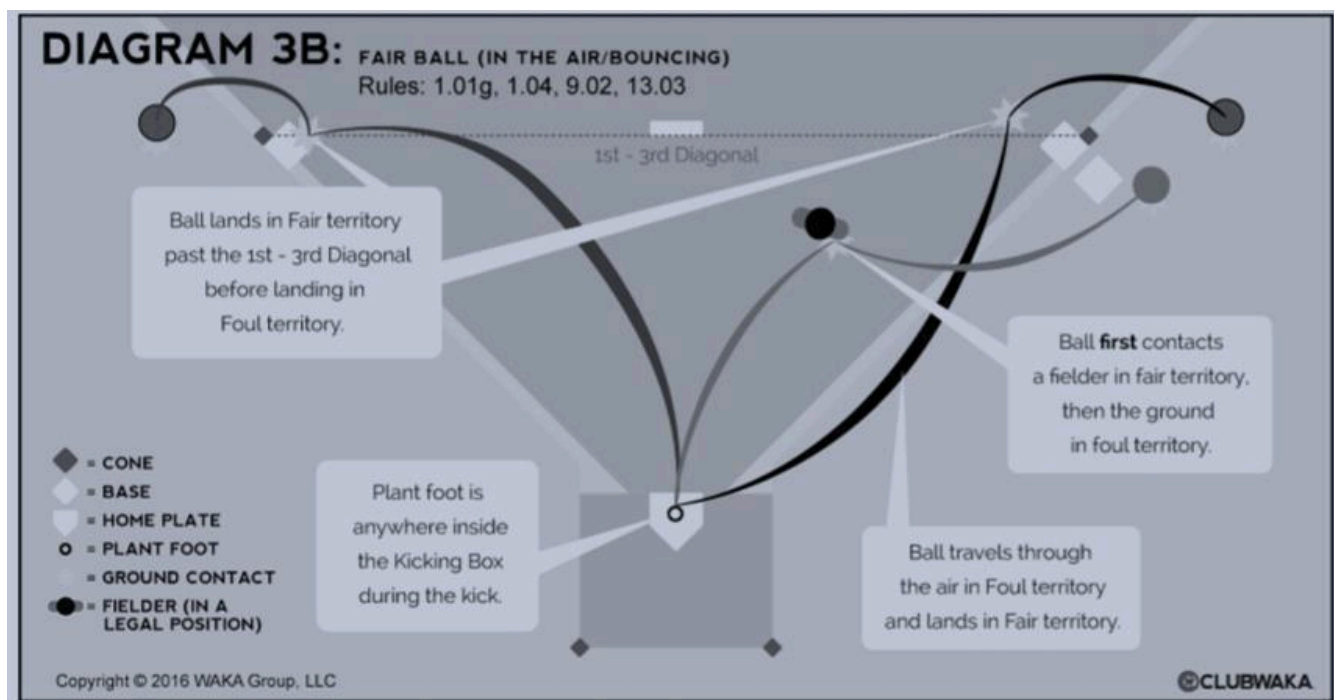
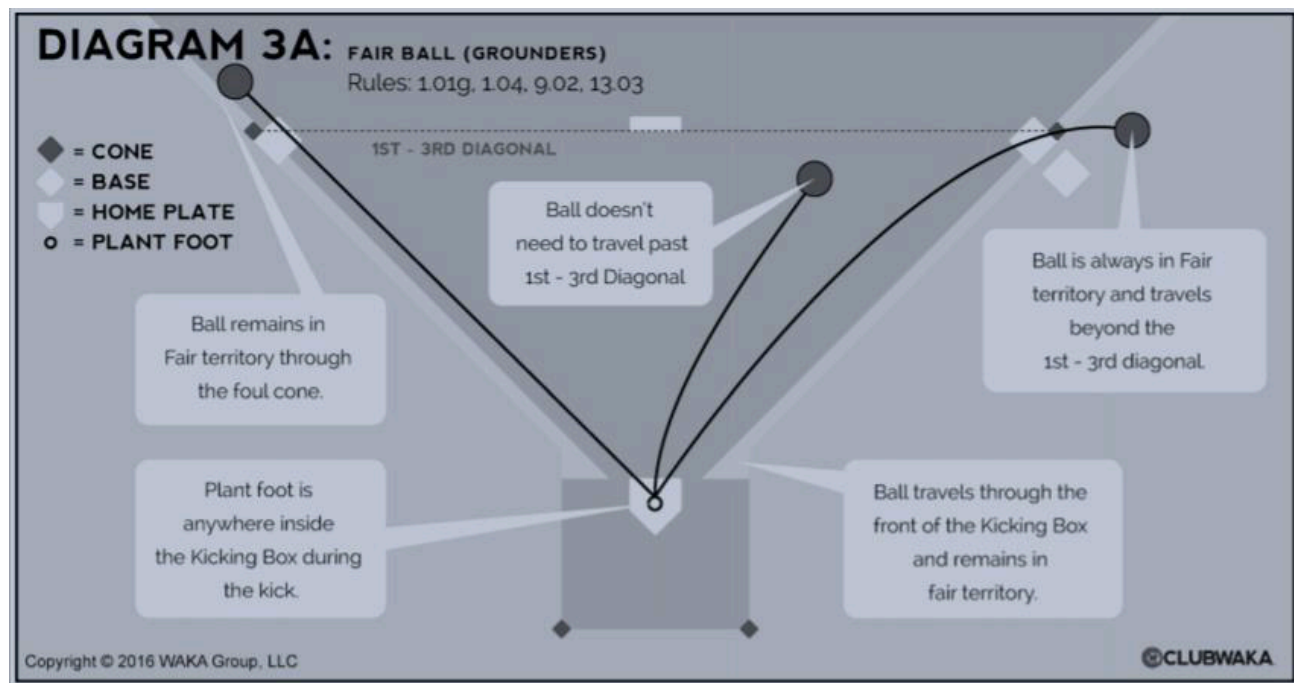
SECTION B - COMPETITORS AND ATTENDANTS

1. PARTICIPANTS

- a. All participating players must appear on written lineups, reflecting that game's kicking order, to be exchanged between the captains of each team before play begins.
- b. A claim of improper kicking order must be made to the Head Referee who will make the final determination. Such a claim must contain two parts:
 - i. That the written kicking order was exchanged in accordance with Rule 4.01.
 - ii. That the claim is made on the field no sooner than the first pitch thrown to the accused "wrong" kicker, and no later than the first pitch thrown to the subsequent kicker. The burden of proof rests with the accused team. Any resulting play is nullified by a finding of improper kicking order, with an out recorded for the "wrong" kicker (see Rule 14.02i). A player removed from the kicking order for ejection, injury, illness, or any reason (per Rule 16.02) does not constitute an improper kicking order.

2. TEAMS

- a. Each game shall have two (2) participating teams: the Away team, which kicks first each inning, and the Home team, which kicks last each inning.
- b. While fielding, each team must field at least eight (8) and no more than eleven (11) players, which must include one pitcher and one catcher at any time during the game.
- c. For a given game, each team shall have one Captain and one Co-Captain (collectively "the Captains") who are jointly responsible for the team. The Captains may discuss calls with the Head Referee, but must accept the Head Referee's final ruling. Other players besides the Captains that dispute calls with the Referees are subject to ejection from the game.



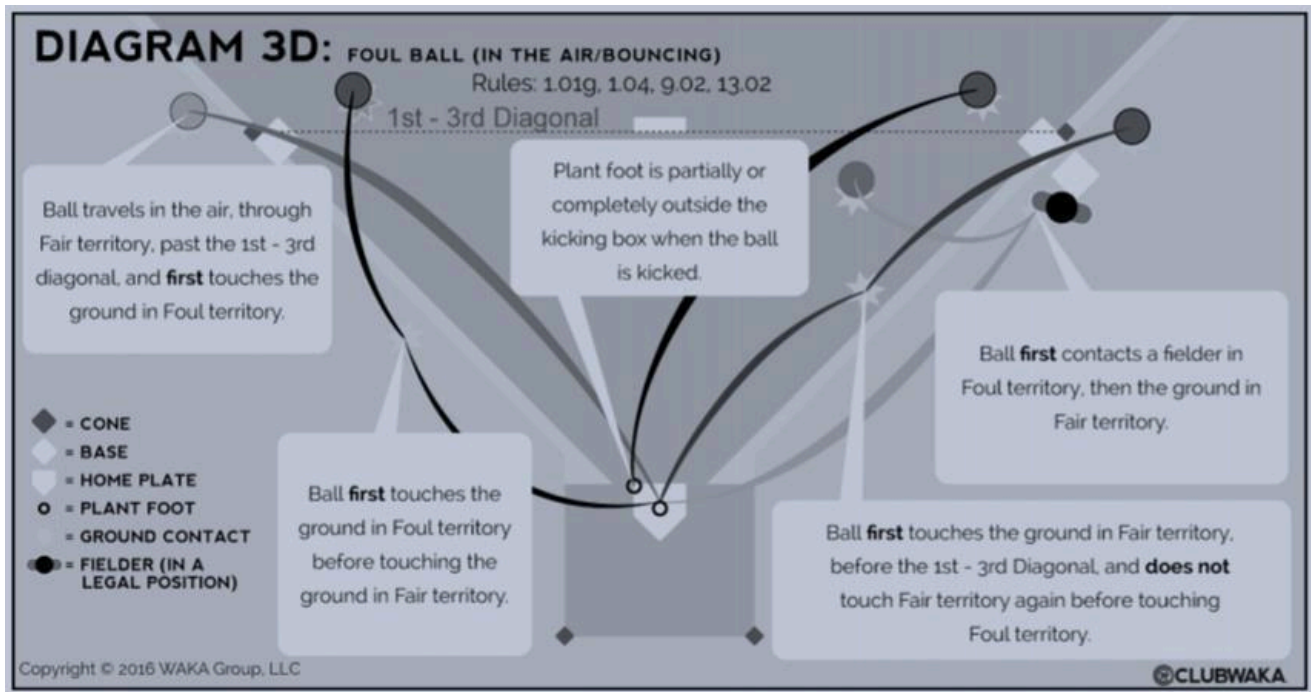
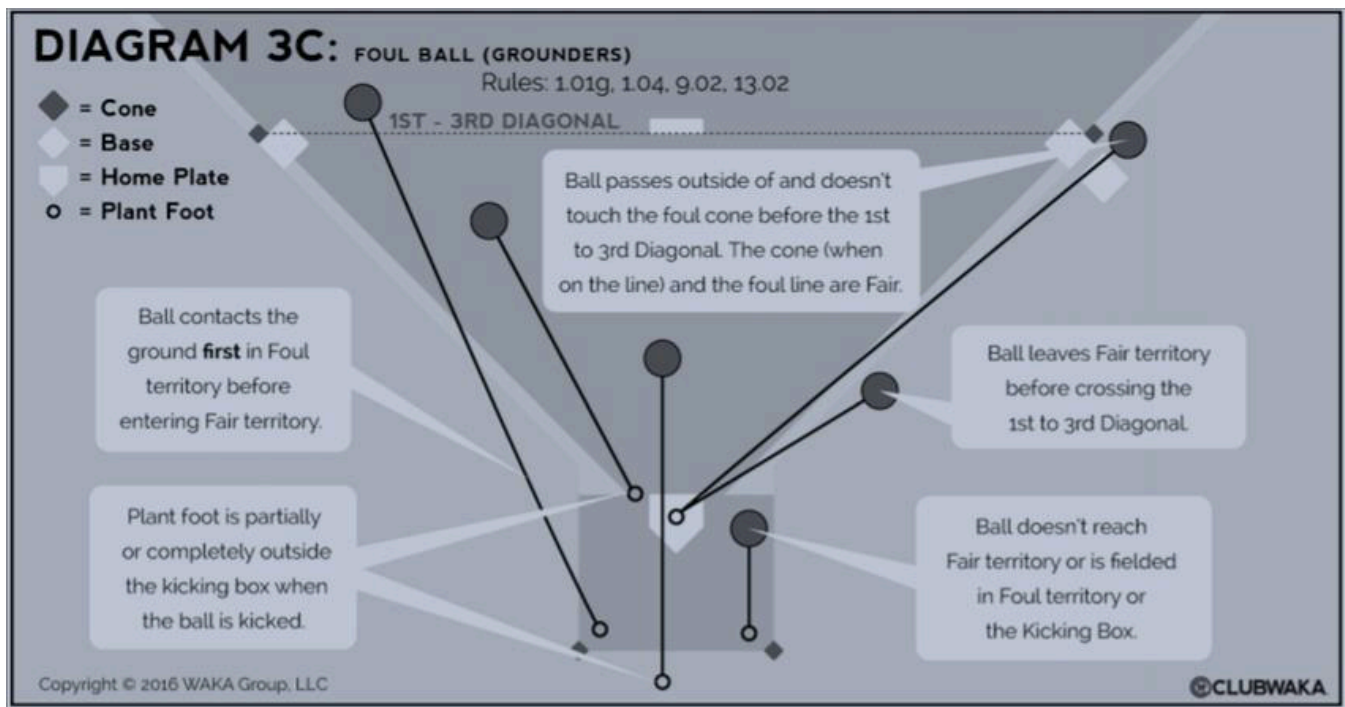
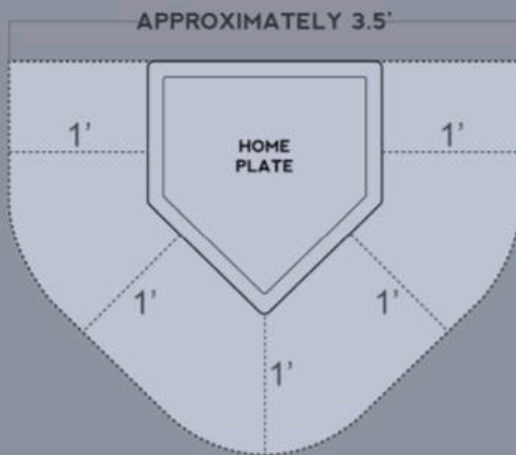
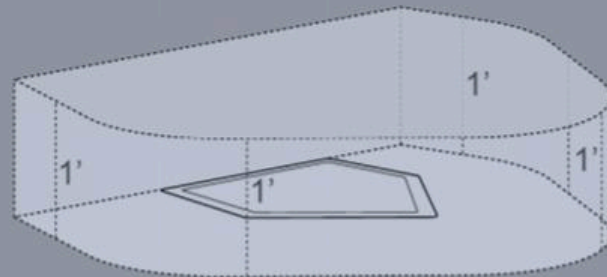


DIAGRAM 4: STRIKE ZONE

The Strike Zone extends 1' out from the side and rear edges of Home Plate (4a) and up to 1' directly above that plane (4b). (The Strike Zone is subject to Home Plate Referee's perception.)



4A: TOP VIEW OF STRIKE ZONE
(white shading)



4B: 3D VIEW OF STRIKE ZONE
(white shading)

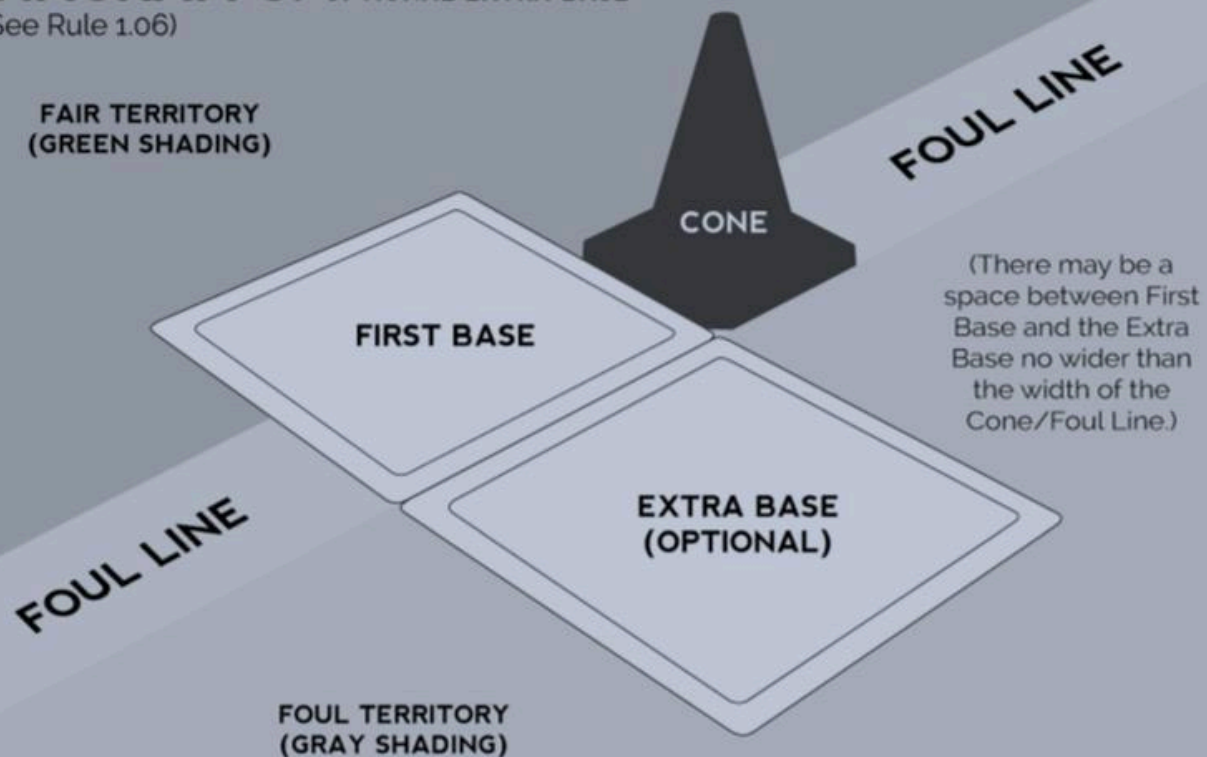
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DIAGRAM 5: OPTIONAL EXTRA BASE

(See Rule 1.06)

FAIR TERRITORY
(GREEN SHADING)



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ARTICLE VII – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

SECTION A – PROTEST FOR RULES INFRACTIONS

The spirit of these rules is to ensure a fun environment and participant enjoyment. All games are to be played in a sportsmanlike manner. If necessary, the World Adult Kickball Association (WAKA) will address any inconsistencies, discrepancies, and misunderstandings in accordance with the spirit of these rules.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE XIX – YOUTH WRESTLING

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

SECTION A – AGE DIVISION

1. There are ten divisions for males and eight divisions for females. Age is determined by year of birth.

Men's Age Divisions and Weight Classes		
DIVISION	BIRTH DATES	WEIGHT CLASSES
Bantam	per USA Wrestling	40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 75+ (15lbs max. difference)
Intermediate	per USA Wrestling	50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 87, 95, 103, 112, 120, 120+ (20lbs max. difference)
Novice	per USA Wrestling	60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 112, 120, 130, 14, 140+ (25lbs max. difference)
Schoolboy	per USA Wrestling	70, 77, 84, 91, 98, 105, 112, 120, 128, 136, 144, 152, 160, 175, 190, 210, 265
Cadet	per USA Wrestling	88, 94, 100, 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 170, 182, 195, 22, 285
UWW Cadet	per USA Wrestling	(IN KG) 39-42, 46, 50, 54, 58, 63, 69, 76, 85, 85-100, 125
Junior	per USA Wrestling & enrolled in grades 9-12	100, 106, 113, 120, 126, 132, 138, 145, 152, 160, 170, 182, 195, 220, 285
UWW Junior	per USA Wrestling with medical certificate	(IN KG) 46-50, 55, 60, 63, 66, 70, 74, 79, 84, 96, 120
Senior Freestyle	per USA Wrestling with medical certificate	(IN KG) 57, 61, 65, 70, 74, 86, 97, 125
Senior Greco	per USA Wrestling with medical certificate	(IN KG) 59, 66, 71, 75, 80, 85, 98, 130
Women's Age Divisions and Weight Classes		
Division	Birth Dates	Weight Classes
Intermediate	per USA Wrestling	45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 85+
Novice	per USA Wrestling	60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 102, 110, 118, 118+
Schoolgirl	per USA Wrestling	81, 89, 97, 105, 113, 120, 128, 137, 145, 155, 175, 195
Cadet	per USA Wrestling	84, 88, 95, 101, 108, 115, 124, 132, 143, 154, 172, 198
UWW Cadet	per USA Wrestling	(IN KG) 36-38, 40, 43, 46, 49, 52, 58, 60, 65, 70, 78, 84, 100
Junior	per USA Wrestling & enrolled in grades 9-12	97, 105, 112, 117, 121, 125, 130, 139, 148, 159, 172, 198
UWW Junior	per USA Wrestling with medical certificate	(IN KG) 40-44, 48, 51, 55, 59, 63, 67, 72, 79.5*
Senior	per USA Wrestling with medical certificate	(IN KG) 48, 53, 55, 58, 60, 63, 69, 75

NOTE: *Not a UWW weight utilized internationally

Italicized indicates Olympic weight categories used during Olympic and Olympic game qualifying events

2. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoin departments with the following restrictions:
- Home County or Agency has no program.

- b. No recruiting by adjoining agency.
 - c. Cannot cross district lines.
 - d. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - e. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - f. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and home-county of each crossover participant. The district must forward the information to the State Host and State Athletic Chair.
 - h. Participants must be approved by their District Athletic Chair. Any and all protest of crossovers must be done prior to district competition. Once they are approved, they are legal throughout district and state.
 - i. When a private agency is the only provider of a program and a participant must purchase a membership plus pay fees then the participant will be allowed to participate with an agency across county lines.
 - j. If a wrestler lives within a subdivision that encompasses multiple counties or agencies, that wrestler can choose the agency to compete with.
 - k. To allow a participant to compete for the same team in GRPA that they do year round, as long as it is a GRPA agency team. The participant must have a USA Wrestling membership card presented at the time of participant check-in. A 120 day turnover period would be required for USA Wrestling membership as outlined in USA Wrestling guidelines.
- 3. There shall be three classifications in youth competition: A, B, and C.
 - 4. Youth coaches must be certified by one the following programs: NYSCA, ACEP, or GHSA.
 - 5. Any competitor or coach ejected from a game for unsportsmanlike conduct will be suspended for one game, in addition to the game from which ejected; or, in the case of an individual event within a meet or match, for the duration of that event.

SECTION B – EVENTS

- 1. Greco-Roman and Freestyle wrestling basically differ as follows:
 - a. In Greco-Roman Wrestling, it is strictly forbidden to grasp the opponent below the beltline or to trip him or to use the legs actively on his opponent to perform any action.
 - b. In Freestyle and Women's Wrestling, however, it is permissible to grasp the legs of the opponent, to trip him or her and to use the legs actively to perform any action.
- 2. Beach Wrestling and Folkstyle Wrestling are subject to specific regulations.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

GRPA Wrestling tournaments shall be governed by current rules and regulations of USA Wrestling. See http://assets.ngin.com/attachments/document/0119/1288/Rule_Book_Edit_4-24-2017.pdf for more information.

- 1. Per the “Return to Play Act of 2013”, effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
- 2. All head and assistant coaches that are coaching youth teams participating in all levels of GRPA

Athletics must have undergone a criminal background check through their Department. By signing the teams GRPA roster, the Department Director or their designee attests that this has taken place.

3. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

SECTION B – LENGTH OF MATCHES

DIVISION	FREESTYLE/GRECO
Men's Bantam Intermediate Novice Schoolboy Schoolgirl UWW Cadet	Two 2 minute periods with 30 second rest between periods
Cadet Junior Senior	Two 3 minute periods with 30 second rest between periods
DIVISION	FOLKSTYLE
Men's Bantam Intermediate	All rounds: three 1 minute periods
Novice Schoolboy Schoolgirl	Championship: one 1 minute & two 1:30 minute periods Consolation: three 1 minute periods
Cadet Junior	Championship: three 2 minute periods Consolation: one 1 minute and two 2 minute periods
UWW Cadet Senior	N/A

SECTION C – SPECIAL PROVISIONS

1. Weigh-In Procedure
 - a. Wrestlers must show their USA card and registration form to receive a weigh-in card.
 - b. The contestants will be weighed wearing their “competition singlet” without modifications and without their shoes after having been examined by qualified trainers and/or physicians who are obliged to eliminate any wrestler who presents any danger of contagious disease.
 - i. **Officials responsible for the weigh-in must check that the wrestler's singlet is the singlet they will use for the competition.**
 - c. No weight tolerance will be allowed for the singlet at any age level.
 - d. For all competitions, wrestlers may only weigh-in at one weight.
2. In Freestyle and Greco events, all Schoolgirl and Schoolboy level wrestlers and younger are allowed to have a coach present during their match. In Folkstyle events, this is not mandatory.
3. **Please note the 30 second rest time is from whistle to whistle, do not allow extra rest time talking to coaches. It is not 30 seconds talking to the coach.**

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. The use of protective headgear of a type required for scholastic wrestling is authorized and recommended in Junior, Cadet, and UWW Cadet competition.
2. Headgear is allowed in Masters, Senior, U23, University and UWW Junior competition, but must be removed at the request of the opponent unless it is worn for a certified medical reason.
3. Headgear is mandatory for all Schoolboys/girl and younger in all USAW Regional and National Championships.
4. In any division, a face mask is allowed only to protect an existing injury, or an injury occurring during the bout, and must be prescribed by a medical doctor or the event's chief medical officer.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

1. Wrestlers must weigh-in wearing the singlet they will use for competition.
2. SINGLET
 - a. The singlet must be colored predominantly a clearly distinguishable shade of red or blue (other colors may be mixed with red or blue, but the singlet must still be clearly red or blue).
 - b. For males, either a high cut or low cut singlet is allowed.
 - c. Women wrestlers must wear a properly fitting sports bra underneath their singlets.
 - d. For Cadet and Junior Division National Championships ("Fargo"), athletes must wear their state approved singlet.
 - e. Only for the USAW Senior Team Trials shall athletes be required to wear the "high cut" singlet (predominantly red or blue) as stipulated by UWW.
 - f. The use of a two-piece singlet/uniform is not allowed at any Freestyle or Greco-Roman USAW Regional or National Championship.
 - g. Folkstyle wrestlers are allowed to wear a two-piece singlet/uniform provided the following conditions are met: shorts must be either compression or board shorts and tops must be a tight-fitting sleeveless, short, or long sleeve shirt (shorts shall not be excessively baggy or have pockets, buttons, or snaps).
 - h. For any regional, national, or international competitions held in the United States, women competitors in all age divisions must wear a women's cut singlet.
 - i. Wrestlers must wear shoes designed specifically for wrestling, with firm ankle support. Furthermore, competitors are required to tape their shoe laces down (wrestlers must provide their own tape) or wear a wrestling shoe fixed with an apparatus that prevents unfastening of the laces.
3. All wrestlers are prohibited to:
 - a. Wear bandages on wrists, arms or ankles except in the case of injury and on doctor's orders. These bandages must be covered with elastic straps. Hard (knee) braces must be covered with a minimum of ½ inch closed cell neoprene padding. The chief medical officer or head athletic trainer (or if unavailable, the head wrestling official), prior to competition, has final approval for any accessory taping or protective equipment.
 - b. Wearing any tape on only one finger. Tape can be worn to provide support to two or more fingers. Again, the chief medical officer or head athletic trainer has final approval of any

accessory taping worn by the athlete.

- c. Apply any greasy or sticky substance to the body.
 - d. Arrive at the mat perspiring for the beginning of the first of second periods of a match. It is the responsibility of the coach and the wrestler to report dry and “toweled down”. Referees may not mandate that wrestlers “dry off” during the middle of a period.
4. It is forbidden to wear earrings, barrettes, bracelets, rings, or any metal or rigid object, as well as men’s wrestling singlet with a T-shirt underneath. Female wrestlers are prohibited from wearing underwire bras.
- a. The wrestlers must come to the mat fully dressed and prepared to wrestle. If the athletes do not come to the match prepared, they are allowed one minute to conform to the rules, otherwise risking disqualification from the match. Under no circumstances are the athletes allowed to change their singlet mat side—this must be done in a private area at the arena.
5. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.

Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.

SECTION C – AREA REQUIREMENTS

1. The Mat:
 - a. The official international mat consists of four distinct areas:
 1. The Starting area, which is a one-meter circle in the very center of the mat.
 2. The Passivity zone, which is a one-meter band around the perimeter of the Center area. The passivity zone may be marked by taping a line of dashes inside the out-of-bounds line.
 3. The Protection area, which should extend a minimum of 1.5 meters beyond the Passivity zone. Adequate protection around all mats should be in place and clearly marked. Each pair of wrestlers is entitled to a wrestling area devoid of obstructions, including other wrestlers, coaches and observers, etc.
 - b. The inner 10-foot folkstyle circle has no meaning internationally, and when standing, the contestants start in the middle, facing each other about a meter apart. It is not mandatory that the athletes begin the match or subsequent restarts on any “starting” lines.
 - c. One corner of the mat should be marked in red and the other in blue, so the wrestlers and the coaches know where to report. This can be done with colored chairs, with colored plywood under the chairs, or simply with red and blue signs. The red corner should be on the referee’s left as he faces the judge’s table.
 - d. UWW approved mats are not required for domestic competition.
 - e. For local and state level competitions for the age groups Schoolboy/Schoolgirl and lower, mats less than full size but not less than a quarter of a full sized (standard) mat may be used when necessary.
 - f. On mats where a line is used to indicate the out-of-bounds, the outermost edge of that line is

considered as the true out-of-bounds. For purposes of this rule, the line itself is still considered part of the wrestling area.

- f. The area around the mats should be large enough to accommodate a table for the mat chairman and volunteer clock controllers, a table for the judge, one or two score clocks, and any necessary video equipment used.

ARTICLE IV – MEETS AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

All District level competition is to be completed by the Saturday before the State tournament.

SECTION B – STATE

State tournaments will be conducted the second Saturday in February.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS AND PARTICIPANTS

SECTION A – HOST

The Host Agency shall be responsible for providing all officials necessary for the proper management of the State Meet, including meet referee, officials, mats, timers, scorers, tournament director, awards personnel, announcer, and others as deemed necessary.

SECTION B – MEET OFFICIALS

1. All officials should look professional and well groomed. Jewelry, outside of a wedding ring and watch to accurately determine the end time of a match, should not be worn. The official's uniform for the USWOA shall include: a black polo shirt, gray trousers, black belt, black socks and black shoes. The officials will wear a blue armband on their right wrist and a red armband on their left wrist. They shall have a functioning whistle and lanyard available.
2. If possible, each bout should consist of three officials—a mat chairman, a referee, and a judge. However, if the size of the tournament at local, state, and regional events exceeds the available number of officials, it is acceptable to not use three officials. Decisions must be made unanimously or by majority in all cases of judgment.
3. It is also essential that the referee use hand gestures to indicate which wrestler is being warned to help the other officials, coaches and spectators understand what they are looking for.

SECTION C – COMPETITIONS AND ATTENDANTS

1. Call to the mat:
 - a. The wrestlers are either called to the mat or their bout number and assigned mat are indicated on at least two screens or monitors for events and results, (USA Wrestling Rules Revolving Screen with names) located at the wrestling venue.
 - b. Wrestlers are only guaranteed a 15 minute rest between bouts in all styles, including Folkstyle (20 minutes per UWW rules to only be used in UWW events). However, this rule will not apply to events that serve as a world championship trials event or qualifier for a trials event where the rest time will be 30 minutes.
 - c. If a wrestler is not present at the time of his/her bout, they will be called over a loudspeaker three times at 30-second intervals. If after the third call the wrestler is not present, he/she will be disqualified from that match and the opponent will win by default.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

RULE XX – YOUTH CROSS COUNTRY

ARTICLE I – ELIGIBILITY

There are four divisions. Participants must be 6 by the age control date: on December 31, current year. The divisions are:

<u>GIRLS</u>	<u>BOYS</u>
8 & Under	8 & Under
10 & Under	10 & Under
12 & Under	12 & Under
14 & Under	14 & Under

1. For all team sports allow within district lines for individuals to compete in the nearest or adjoining departments with the following restrictions:
 - a. Home County or Agency has no program.
 - b. Cannot cross district lines.
 - c. Cannot pass over a program to participate in another agency.
 - d. Must participate in the sport program in the host agency.
 - e. Host agency must endorse participant.
 - f. Participant must be approved by District Athletic Chair. Once approved, they are legal throughout District and State.
 - g. Host agency must notify the District Athletic Chair with list and Home County of each crossover participant. The district must forward info to the State Host and Athletic Chair.

ARTICLE II – REGULATIONS

SECTION A – GOVERNING RULES

United States of America Track and Field (USATF) and National Federation of High Schools (if not covered in USTF) The National Federation (National Alliance Edition) Track and Field Rules is the official guide for GRPA meets, with exceptions as may be stated in this manual. USATF will be utilized if not covered in this manual or NFHS

1. When bib(s) are provided, every competitor shall wear them when competing.
2. If one bib is provided, it must be worn visibly on the front. No athlete shall be permitted to participate in any competition without the appropriate bib. Bibs are to be worn as issued (cutting or folding numbers is not permitted). The identifying information on the bib need not be numeric. It shall be of sufficient font type, size, and contrast for clear visibility. Not wearing an assigned bib may be grounds for disqualification. There will be an additional fee for replacement bibs.
3. Receiving physical support from another (other than from another competition)

4. or in the event helping to recover to a standing position) that assists in making forward progress in the race may be grounds for disqualification.
5. Any competitor who shall refuse to obey the directions of the Referee or other proper official, or who shall conduct himself/herself in an unsportsmanlike manner, or who is offensive by action or language to the officials, spectators, or competitors at any competition, shall render that competitor liable to disqualification by the Referee from participation.
6. All competitors are responsible for knowing the starting time of the event(s), for knowing the registration or check-in method utilized at the start (for some or all of the competitors), and for being at the starting line at the appointed time for instructions and the start of the race.
7. Any unsportsmanlike conduct that occurs during the race, such as elbowing another competitor, pushing or striking another competitor, blocking another competitor from passing or any other behavior deemed inappropriate by designated officials, shall be grounds for disqualification.
8. Pacing or running along-side a competitor who is actively competing is not permitted and may be grounds for the competitor being disqualified.
9. Do not wear a GPS watch.
10. Per the "Return to Play Act of 2013", effective January 1, 2014, all agencies are required to provide concussion education material to all youth participants and their parents. The verification of compliance to this law is affirmed by the signature of the agency director on the GRPA roster.
11. Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone, is not permitted in changing areas, rest rooms, or locker rooms. The use of audio or visual recording devices is not allowed in resolution of protested matters.

ARTICLE III – EQUIPMENT

SECTION A – APPROVED EQUIPMENT

1. Any shoe that is allowed in USATF Track and Field Events.
2. Running spikes or flats or any other running shoe is permissible. Shoes must be worn during competition. If a competitor loses a shoe during the race and continues the race without the shoe, that shall not be grounds for disqualification.
3. A watch / stopwatch is allowed
4. NO GPS Devices allowed.
5. No Drones allowed once the contest has begun along the course.

SECTION B – UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

All competitors on the same team shall wear identical uniform tops. Competitors are allowed to wear garments underneath the uniform top and are allowed to wear different uniform bottoms.

1. Agency team members, including all boys and girls, should wear like jerseys. Agency boys' team must be dressed alike and the girls must be dressed alike from the waist up. No other youth sports organization patches will be allowed on uniforms in GRPA tournaments. Penalty – Illegal Equipment
2. Coaches and non-player personnel must be attired in a manner that puts GRPA and its member agencies in a positive light. Tournament Directors, Officials, and GRPA State Athletic Committee members reserve the right to remove those from the contest who do not adhere to the standards set forth by the GRPA State Athletic Committee.

- a. Managers, coaches, or team scorers who coach the bases must be attired in staff shirts or jerseys that are identical in style and color with each other.
3. It is mandatory that team members be in uniform while actually competing in events. (APPROVED RULING: If an agency has a limited supply of identical uniform tops, it is acceptable to supplement the uniform tops with a top that is very similar in color and pattern. It is conceivable that an agency with limited supply of same color jersey could continuously exchange these jerseys prior to the start of an event, but such a practice shall not be allowed during the conduct of an event among competitors still actively participating). The basic body color determines matching uniform tops. The logos, numbers, trim, etc. does not have to match if the basic color is the same.
4. No jewelry or GPS devices are allowed to be worn by competitors. (A watch is not considered jewelry and may be worn)

SECTION C – COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<u>Division</u>	<u>Race Distances</u>
8U	2K
10U & 12U	3K
14U	3K

1. A variance of up to 15 meters is allowable for each race distance.
2. A map of the course area should be made available prior to race commencing.
3. The course may be walked/previewed prior to the race beginning. All such preview must be completed by time the meet announcer closes the course – IE: 15-30 minutes prior to first race of the day.

ARTICLE IV – MEETS AND AWARDS

SECTION A – DISTRICT

Beginning in 2020 this will be an open invitational stat event. Your SAC Chairs will need to be notified and teams entered in state by agency directors and GRPA SAC members. Electronic Entry will be required through Coach O (www.coacho.com) or other approved electronic entry methods as indicated by Host Agency. The GRPA SAC will determine when district meets will be moving forward.

SECTION B – STATE

1. Entries should be conducted by using “Coach O” (www.coacho.com) or comparable electronic entry software – fees required at checkout and if invoice needed it can be downloaded through coach o or contact host for billing. All fees must be paid or use of Approved Purchase Order prior to start of Meet.
2. The top 3 individual finishers in the state meet in each age group and gender shall be awarded trophies and finishers 4-20 shall be awarded medals.

ARTICLE V – OFFICIALS

SECTION A – HOST

1. The Host shall provide a minimum number of competent adults in accordance with Rule to serve as:
 - a. Meet Director
 - b. Starter – utilized only at Official Start
 - c. Clerk of the Course – ECO Operators
 - d. Head Finish Judge-Timer and Finish Judge-Timers
 - e. Finish Chute with appropriate markings and personnel
 - f. Scores/Scoring – Through an Electronic timing source with photo finish. Once Invitational status is removed should comply with USTF rule sections as listed in GRPA SAC Manual and USTF Specifications.
 - g. Other assistant officials are not required, but are recommended as specified in USTF Rules.
2. The Host shall be responsible for providing areas and equipment, electronic timing system, releasing publicity, and organizing competition for the meet.

SECTION B – MEET OFFICIALS

The State Athletic Committee shall serve as the Games Committee (Jury of Appeals), and the Chair or his assigned representative (meet host/director) shall serve as Referee for the State Meet. Each District Commissioner is encouraged to provide a similar authority for district meets.

SECTION C – COMPETITIONS AND ATTENDANTS

Attendants, coaches, spectators, parents or persons not designated as meet officials shall not accompany a competitor to the starting line or during a race. Any competitor will be disqualified if, in the opinion of the judges or meet officials, he or she has in any way been aided by a coach, teammate or anyone connected directly or indirectly with the team concerned. Such aid would include running alongside a teammate, being stationed at various points near the track, or located near any field events for the purpose of aiding or coaching the competitor after the race or field event has started. The degree of enforcement shall be announced by the Meet Director prior to the Meet.

ARTICLE VI – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

SECTION A – PROTESTS AND RULES INFRACTIONS

1. The judgment decision by an official on any play shall not be protested.
2. Protest on misinterpretation of the rules are allowed to the referee and if accepted as valid by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall coordinate any such protest and shall serve as the odd-number member of the Tournament Protest Committee as determined prior to the game by the Agency Host in coordination with the District Commissioner for District level competition and with the State Athletic Committee Chair for State levels of competition. If a protest is accepted by the Tournament Director, it must be made by the certified coach or certified staff in charge of the team at the time of the alleged infraction. A full explanation will be given by the protest committee before play is continued. If the decision of the protest committee is appealed to the State Athletic Committee, it must be done so in time for any action to be resolved prior to the next game in which either team is involved.
3. No protest on rules interpretation will be accepted after the event continues following the alleged infraction. IE: must be brought to meet personal attention prior to the next race/event.

For more information regarding protests and appeals, see: Rule I, Article IV, Section C-11. For more information on protest committee organization and responsibility, see Rule II, Article I, Section A.

GRPA STATE ATHLETIC CASEBOOK

1. If the defending state champion adult team cannot participate in the next GRPA State Tournament, can the agency send another adult team to represent them? *Yes. As long as the team is an integral part of their program.*
2. During the course of the regular season, an open league player moves their residence outside the Agency's boundaries prior to district competition, but after the official roster has been verified. Is the player eligible? *Yes. As long as the player plays and is an integral part of the local agency's league.*
3. Whose watch determines the official game time? *Tournament Director*
4. Can an agency's staff representative protest a player's eligibility if the agency's team is not participating in a game against the team with the protested player? *Yes. As long as they have proof and they have an entry in the same tournament.*
5. Define or give examples of the definition or status of a "professional athlete." Does this include out of country teams and competition? *It includes anyone who is accepting money for playing a sport.*
6. A GRPA agency has failed to pay their state or district dues or any outstanding fees of any kind (entry fees, forfeit fees, host fees, etc.) Are they eligible for current GRPA competition or can they host a state tournament/event? *No. Not until all dues, fees, or fines are paid.*
7. Who has the authority and responsibility to cancel, move, and/or reschedule a state tournament? *The Tournament Director may reschedule games in a tournament, but the State Athletic Committee must make the decision to cancel or move from any agency or reschedule a state tournament to another site.*
8. What other protests may be made by an agency's representative even though their team is not involved in the ball game? *No protest except ineligible players may be made by anyone not involved in the game.*
9. When the various copies of the roster (white, yellow and pink) are mailed to the appropriate persons, do all roster forms get mailed or only the district champion and district runner-ups copies? *All copies should be mailed within 48 hours.*
10. If the minister of a church or personnel director of a business is not available to verify a roster, who will be the next person recommended to verify the roster? *The associate pastor, chair of deacons, chairman of the board, assistant personnel director, plant manager, or the next ranking individual at the church or business.*
11. If a child's identity is questioned, what proof will be acceptable for identification? *All accepted identification documents as listed in the manual. The burden of proof is on the protestor*
12. If a team does not have an entry fee paid prior to their 1st game in state competition, should the team be allowed to play? *If the tournament director has a reason to believe there might be a problem connecting then no, otherwise, bill the department later. If a district commits a team to state competition and their team withdraws to cause the cancellation of the state tournament, who is penalized? The district is responsible and must pay all fees including awards.*
13. If a player represents one district in a subdivision of GRPA competition, can he represent another district in that same subdivision or division even if that player's team did not win the district tournament beforehand? *No*
14. A player dresses out for a high school team, but he never has any playing time. He then quits the school team. Can he represent an agency in a GRPA competition? *No, the player is not eligible.*

15. County does not have an agency; can little Johnny or Susie play on the closest agency's district team? *Yes, with restrictions. See Rule I, Article II, Section B1di on page 38. Also, check the eligibility guidelines found for each sport.*
16. If the adult player who was protested has not provided proof of name and address by game's end, is that player ineligible? Does that make the team ineligible? If team is ruled ineligible, what action should be taken by the tournament director? *The protested player must show identification prior to the next game of either team. IF this is not done, then the player and the team are ineligible and the tournament director should remove the team from the tournament.*
17. A player works for a company that has a multi-branch office. Can the player represent any agency where the offices are located? (i.e. – ABC Airlines has offices in many Georgia cities, who can he or she legally represent?) *No. He/she must play only in the county where they work. If he/she works in more than one county then he/she must play where he/she lives.*
18. What is the penalty and/or forfeit imposed when a team or individual is found guilty of using an ineligible player? *Any and all fees as applicable.*
19. If a child only has a baptismal record as proof of birth, is this acceptable for verification? *No. See Rule I, Article III, Section B1 on page 43.*
20. What formal proof of a child's adoption is required for GRPA competition? *Court Records*
21. If, at State competition, the host has not received the roster from district competition, is the team representing the district eligible to play? *Technically no, but the Tournament Director must make the final decision and do what he/she feels is required.*
22. A high school basketball player has completed his/her current season before Thanksgiving Holiday. The Recreation Department's season will not begin until January 1st, is the player eligible to represent the Recreation Department in GRPA competition? *No.*
23. Is a school record acceptable for birth verification? *No*
24. Team where all players live in one county plays in another county because their county does not have enough teams for a league. Can they represent the county they live in at district? *Yes, if the local recreation department will enter and consider them as part of his/her program.*
25. If a player advances to state competition in two (2) sub-divisions of two (2) different districts, which team has he/her made ineligible? *The player would be ineligible for both, because he/she can only be on one roster. Both teams would remain eligible if he met all other requirements.*
26. If a child participates in a higher age in local competition, can he/she participate at district and state levels of play? *Yes.*
27. In state tournament competition, if only one official is available, should the game be started? *Yes. The Tournament Director will make this decision.*
28. On a GRPA official roster form for adult competition, does the person's birth date have to be listed on the roster form? *Yes. Roster should be filled out completely.*
29. If an adult player is asked to provide proof of identification, and he/she does not have a driver's license or picture ID, what other proof is acceptable? *Any identification as listed in the manual.*
30. If a professional sport's league is on strike, can the player represent a Recreation Department in GRPA competition? *Not in the sport from which he/she is on strike.*
31. Can names be added on rosters signed at any level of competition? *For district, no. In all team sports, teams are allowed to add up to 3 players to their roster when advancing to a State tournament. This can only be done if there is enough room on the original roster to add the names. Any additions must be*

made and submitted to the State host prior to their team's first game of the State tournament.

32. Agency does not have a league, the team does not play anywhere else, can the agency form a team to play in the district? *Yes. If the director says the team is an integral part of their program.*
33. Can a red-shirted college player on scholarship represent an agency in the sport he is red-shirted in? *No.*
34. Does GRPA have any authority over local play before district or state competitions? *No. Absolutely not!*
35. Baseball: If a pitcher pitches in less than the designated number of pitches requiring one day rest then (a) goes to another position or (b) leaves the game for a substitute, can he go back to the pitcher's position that game? *No for both (a) and (b). See Rule VII, Article II, Section C8b on page 98.*
36. Baseball: Does a pitcher who throws with either arm get to have twice the pitch allotment in a tournament or waive the rest period? *No. Pitches are per player, not per arm.*
37. Baseball: A game starts Wednesday and is rained out/suspended, both teams' pitcher threw more than 31 pitches (10U & 12U divisions) or 41 pitches (14U & 17U divisions), can they pitch in the same continued game on Thursday? *No. They must have a required rest because of exceeding the pitch count on Wednesday. Pitching regulations apply per day and/or game, therefore one or two days of rest are required, the only exception being if this number was reached by finishing a batter.*
38. Baseball: If a pitcher pitches to one batter and then switches positions with the third baseman, (a) can the first pitcher come back to the mound in that same inning and (b) can he return later in the game? *No for both (a) and (b). See Rule VII, Article II, Section C8b on page 98.*
39. Baseball: Can a pitcher in youth baseball, if he pitches (31) thirty-one or more (10U, 12U, 12U Major) and forty-one (41) or more (14U and 17U) in the first game of a day, legally pitch the balance of his maximum limit in the second game of that day? *No. Pitches are tabulated per pitching assignment.*
40. Can a player pitcher who pitched 30 or less (10U, 12U, 12U Major) or 40 pitches (14U and 17U) or less in a game, then play a second game the same day, and then pitch remaining pitches? *Yes*
41. What are the procedures for use of a double first base? *The double base may be used for first base only. When using the double first base, the following rules must be observed:*
 - a. *A batted ball that hits the white section of the double base shall be declared fair. A batted ball that hits the colored section without first touching or bounding over the white section shall be declared foul.*
 - b. *Whenever a play is being made on the batter/runner, the defense must use the white section of the double first base.*
 - c. *Whenever play is being made on the batter/runner, the batter/runner must use the colored section on his/her first attempt to tag first base. NOTE: On extra-base hits or other balls hit to the outfield when there is no chance for a play to be made at the double first base, the batter/runner may touch either the white or colored section of the base. However, should the batter/runner reach and go beyond first base, he/she may only return to the white section of the base.*
 - d. *When tagging up on a fly ball, the white section of the base must be used by the runner. Once foot is permitted to extend behind or on the base into foul territory, as long as the front foot is touching the white section of the base.*
 - e. *When leaving base on a pitched ball in GRPA, the runner must maintain contact with the white section of the base until the ball has reached the plate. Runners may extend a foot behind the white portion of the base, but must maintain contact with the white section until the ball has*

reached the plate.

- f. On an attempted pickoff play, the runner must return to the white section of the base only. This includes a throw from the pitcher, catcher, or any other player, in an attempt to retire the runner at the double first base.*
- g. In 12U, 14U, and 17U age divisions, when the batter/runner becomes a runner on a third strike not caught by the catcher, the batter/runner and the defensive player may use either the colored or the white section.*
- h. Use of the double first base does not change any other rule concerning interference or obstruction at first base. (An errant throw into the three-foot running lane could still result in an obstruction call. Also, the batter/runner must still avoid interference with the fielder attempting to field a batted ball.)*

- 42. If a coach is disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct in a youth game and he is the only “certified coach or recreation representative” at the game site, can the team continue to play? Yes. The Tournament Director should appoint an adult to be with the team. IF unsportsmanlike problems continue then the game could be forfeited.*
- 43. In adult softball, a player is wearing a cap the tournament director considers inappropriate because of what is written on it; can the player or team appeal his decision? No. Tournament directors make the decision with no appeal. The player can remove it or not play. If a player refuses, he will be ejected for unsportsmanlike conduct.*
- 44. Volleyball: If a team is five (5) minutes late for a game, is the team forfeited for the entire match? No. The team will have ten (10) minutes to find a team ready to play for the first game of the match, but they will start the match down one (1) game in the best of two (2) of three (3) matches. If they are more than ten (10) minutes late, they forfeit the match.*
- 45. Can a participant that does not play in district be allowed to play in a state tournament? Yes. If he or she was on the roster prior to district competition and has proper documentation or picture ID at their first appearance, in the next level they are eligible to participate.*

TRANSGENDER INCLUSION POLICY

A. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Georgia Recreation and Park Association (GRPA) and its participating agencies provide inclusive programs to all participants regardless of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, or ability.

GRPA and its participating agencies allow transgender youth and adults to participate in GRPA sanctioned recreational sport programs which correspond to their gender is determined as follows:

- (a) Girls may participate on boys' teams, when there is no girls' team offered in that sport or activity. Boys may not participate on girls' teams even when there is no corresponding boys' sport or activity.
- (b) A student's sex is determined by the sex noted on his/her official certificate at birth.
- (c) The GRPA will attempt to accommodate requests for private restroom or locker/dressing room facilities for students requesting the same at GRPA playoff events or contests provided notice of the request is made as soon as possible to the GRPA Athletic Committee. No athlete shall be required to utilize the private facilities

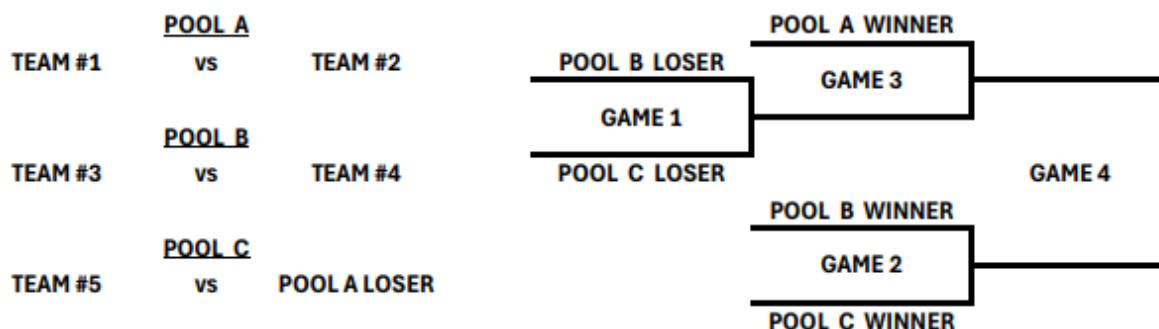
POOL PLAY & BRACKETS

GRPA - POOL PLAY & BRACKET FORMATS

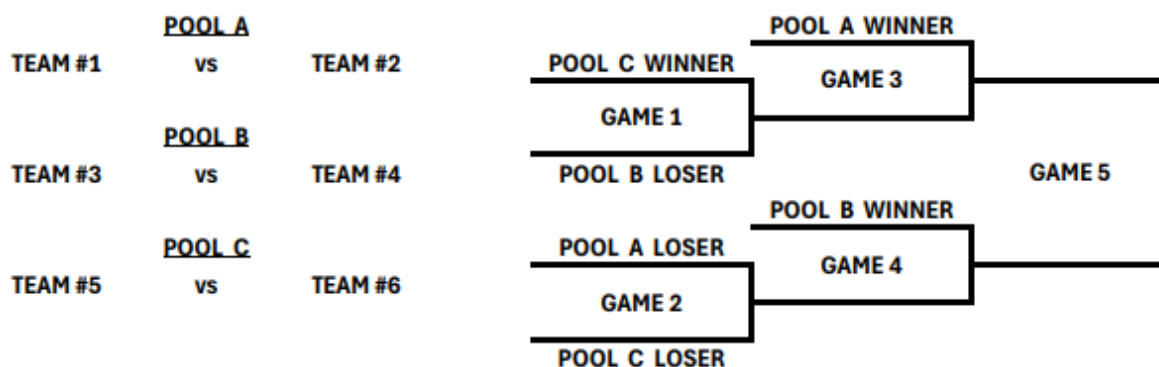
4 TEAM (2 GAME GUARANTEE FORMAT)

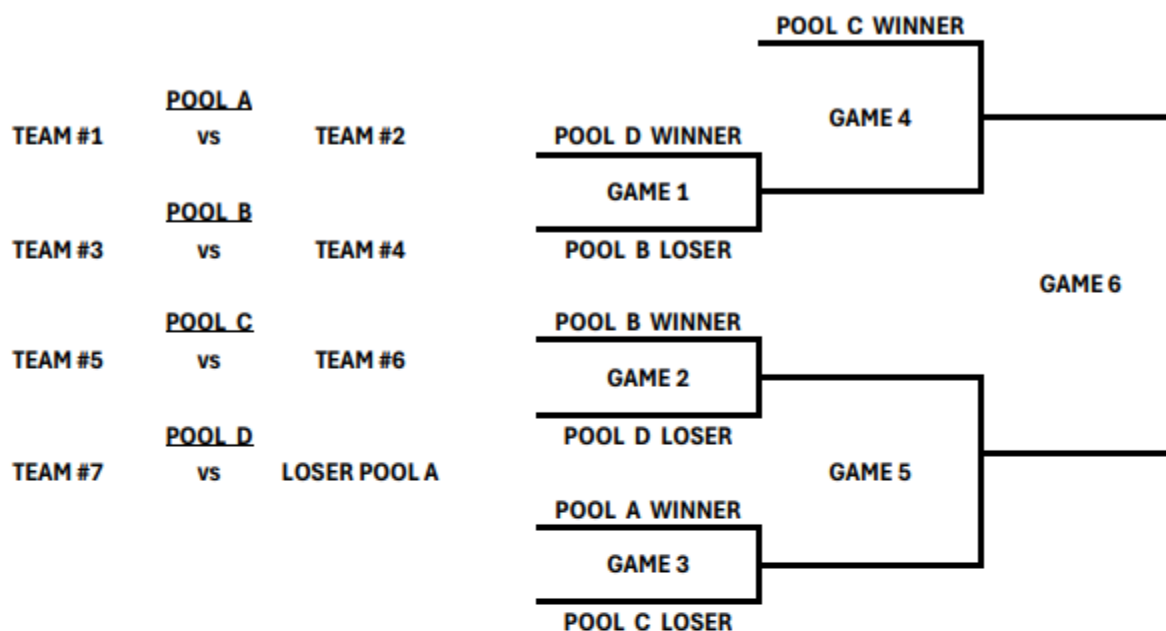
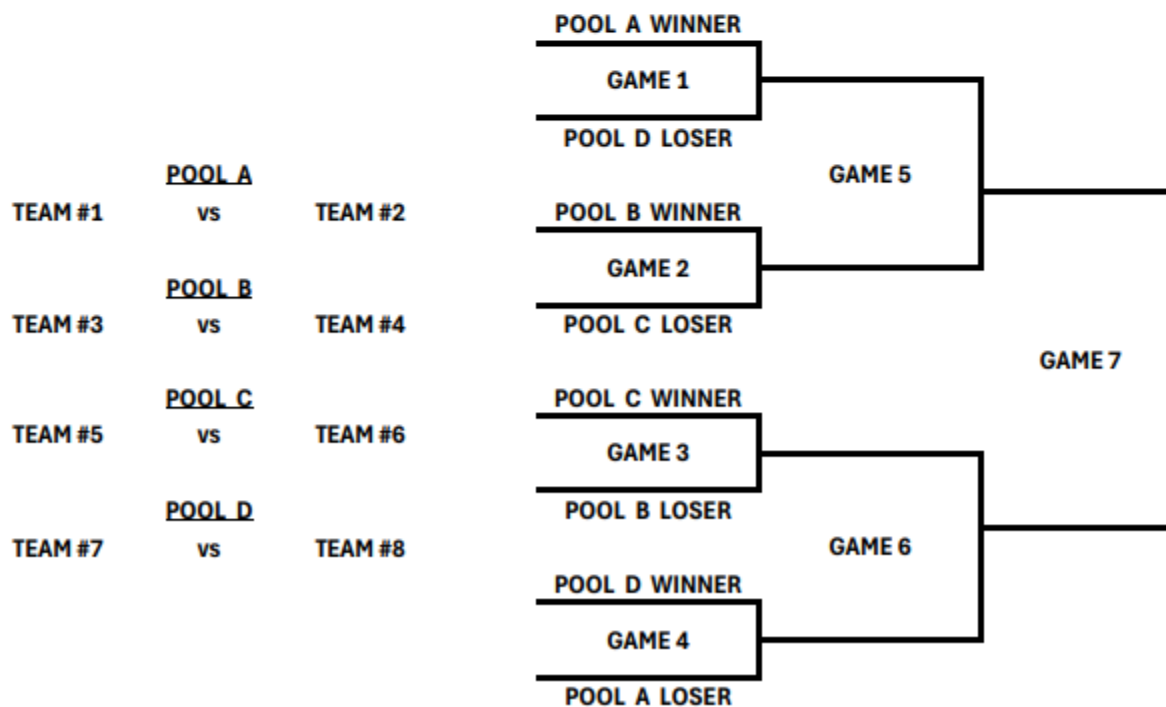


5 TEAM (2 GAME GUARANTEE FORMAT)



6 TEAM (2 GAME GUARANTEE FORMAT)



GRPA - POOL PLAY & BRACKET FORMATS**7 TEAM (2 GAME GUARANTEE FORMAT)****8 TEAM (2 GAME GUARANTEE FORMAT)**

Former Forms /Appendixes can now be found online on the GRPA Website:

www.grpa.org → Athletics tab → Athletic Forms
[Athletic Forms - Georgia Recreation and Park Association](http://www.grpa.org) -
<https://grpa.org/athletic-forms/>

- **GRPA State Tournament Bid Form**: Must be completed online and submitted by the Friday of Conference week
- **GRPA Proposed Rule Change**: Must be completed online and submitted by the Friday during the first full week in August
- **GRPA Roster Form and Disbursement**: Download and complete in pdf or word
- **GRPA Player Add/Pickup Form**: Download and complete Fillable PDF
 - Attach to Roster
- **GRPA Player Release Form**: Download and complete Fillable PDF
 - Attach to Roster
- **Tournament Report Form**: Download and complete Fillable PDF
 - Completed State Tournament Reports are sent to the SAC Chair, SAC Chair-Elect and your District Representatives
- **District Athletic Entry Form**: Used for District Athletic Entries
 - Completed District Tournament forms should be turned in to the District Athletic Chair and the District Athletic Chair elect.
- **Ejection / Protest Incident Form**: Completed by District and State Tournament Hosts

