

Esko Fastpitch Association Policies

Effective: January 28, 2025

MISSION STATEMENT

Esko Fastpitch Association's objective is to build, develop and nurture abilities and love of the game.

LEAGUE PARTICIPATION

The Esko Fastpitch Association's teams will play and follow the rules under the Arrowhead Fastpitch League.

REGISTRATION

- Registration will be in February and/or March.
- Registration will be done by age based on the USSSA guidelines for levels. This guideline is based on the players age as of the date December 31 before the season.
 - 8U: Ages 6, 7, & 8 - Made up of kindergarten, first grade and second grade (Players who start at age 6 will play 3 years at this level.)
 - 10U: players ages 9 & 10 - Made up of third grade and fourth grade
 - 12U: Players ages 11 & 12 - Made up of fifth grade and sixth grade
 - 14U: Players ages 13 & 14 - Made up of seventh grade and eighth grade
 - 16U: Players ages 15 & 16 - Made up of ninth grade and tenth grade
 - 18U: Players ages 17 & 18 - Made up of eleventh grade and twelfth grade
- Late registrations will be allowed for 1 week after the registration deadline. A late fee of \$50 will be assessed. After this date, any requests to be added will be reviewed by the board and they will make the final decision. The late registration fee would apply.
- One exception to this policy is if a new player is moving into the community. No late fees will be assessed in this situation.

REFUNDS

- Requests for a refund must be in writing and submitted to the Esko Fastpitch Association for approval by the board. Esko Fastpitch will only refund players in these situations:
 1. A player moves out of the district before the season starts.
 2. There are not enough players for a team resulting in no team formation.
 3. A player experiences an injury with a doctor note where they will not be able to compete during the season.
- Registration fees are non-refundable after the first scheduled game of the season.

VOLUNTEER COACHES

Esko Fastpitch Association is dependent on the dedication of volunteer coaches to help make softball possible for our area youth. We appreciate our community members who choose to be volunteer coaches. We see the service as a direct and positive investment upon the youth of our community.

- All potential volunteer coaches must undergo a background check each season. The background check will be done through the recommended program through Arrowhead Fastpitch League. Volunteer coaches are not allowed to start practice/games until their background check is cleared.

- Each team will have one head coach and one or two assistant coaches. Background checks for these coaches will be reimbursed by EFA. Additional parents may help on the field, but must complete and pay for a background check through Arrowhead Fastpitch Association.
- It is mandatory that all coaches conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for a youth league. Having fun and encouraging sportsmanship should be the goal of all coaches. Coaches serve as the role model for the players in demonstrating good sportsmanship, maturity, and respect for the officials.

TEAM SELECTION

- Players at each level will be divided up equally onto teams by the Esko Fastpitch Association. The association will place an equal number of grade level kids on teams at each level.
- Players are not to be placed on a team, or with a coach, for the convenience of the parents. This includes carpooling, location in the city, or for any other reason. This rule is not intended to cause inconvenience, but to ensure the league maintains its recreational philosophy.

PLAYER MOVES

Esko Fastpitch Association believes that players are supported best when playing at their age level. However, rare situations occur when a player may need to move up or down. Below are these situations:

- The Esko Fastpitch Association Board agrees by a majority vote that additional players are needed to fill teams at the level above and by moving players up, the level below will not be negatively impacted. The board will make a recommendation on which players should be considered to move up and seek input from the parents. A final decision will be made by the board. If these players choose to move up, and they've registered at the lower level, any increase in fees will be adjusted and invoiced to the player.
- The player's previous coach and/or parent have recommended moving the player down to a lower team for safety reasons. The board, along with the parents will discuss the players safety and make a final decision.

TOURNAMENTS

- The Esko Fastpitch Association will pay the tournament fee for one tournament per season for each recreational team. Participating in tournaments goes above and beyond the regular season expectations of coaches and players. Therefore, the decision to attend a tournament is made by each coach.
- In the event a coach does not have enough players from their team to fill their roster to attend a tournament, they must reach out to the other coaches at that level to ask for volunteer players to fill their roster. The first players to respond will be allowed to participate in the tournament.
- A tournament team is available for players at some of the levels. See tournament team documents for information about these teams.

PLAYER CODE OF CONDUCT

Player's responsibilities are simple; be respectful of others, be responsible, play fair, and always do your best, and always exhibit good sportsmanship.

As an Esko Youth Softball participant I hereby pledge that I will:

- ★ Encourage good sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials, and parents.
- ★ Be a team player and support my teammates.
- ★ Be on time and attend every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coaches if I cannot.
- ★ Work hard to improve my skills.
- ★ Do my best to listen and learn from my coaches.
- ★ Encourage my parents to be involved with my team and League in some capacity.
- ★ Congratulate the other team after each game as a demonstration of sportsmanship.
- ★ Refrain from using violence, unfriendly language, or insults to others.
- ★ Be generous when I win and gracious when I lose.
- ★ Obey the rules of the game and always work for the good of the team.
- ★ Accept the decisions of the officials with grace and never challenge or question calls.
- ★ Conduct myself with honor and dignity.
- ★ Applaud the efforts of my teammates and opponents.

I also agree that if I fail to abide by these rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the Esko Fastpitch Association Board.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As a Esko Youth Softball parent/family member, I WILL:

- ★ Remember that children participate to have fun.
- ★ Be a positive role model for my child and encourage sportsmanship.
- ★ Teach my child to play by the rules and resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility or violence.
- ★ Demand that my child treats coaches, officials, and other players with respect regardless of race, creed, color, gender, or ability.
- ★ Teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning.
- ★ Praise my child for competing fairly and trying hard.
- ★ Promote the emotional and physical well being of athletes ahead of my personal desire to win.
- ★ Respect the officials and coaches and their authority during games.

As a Esko Youth Softball parent/family member, I WILL NOT:

- ★ Force my child to participate.
- ★ Engage in any kind of unsportsmanlike conduct with any official, coach, player, or parent such as booing, taunting, refusing to shake hands, or using profane language.
- ★ Encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health and well being of athletes.
- ★ Ridicule or yell at my child or other participants for making a mistake or losing a game.
- ★ Use drugs, tobacco, or alcohol at any league event.
- ★ Coach my child or other players during games and practices, unless I am a coach.

I also agree that if I fail to abide by these rules and guidelines, I will be subject to disciplinary action to be determined by the Esko Fastpitch Association Board.

