

NORTH BRANCH FASTPITCH ASSOCIATION COACH PACKET

Thank you for your willingness to volunteer as a coach in our program! Coaches are vital to the success of Vikings Fastpitch, providing opportunities, mentorship, and leadership that make a positive difference in the lives of young athletes.

This packet will provide details on items that are required to be completed prior to beginning your coaching role, as well as resources that can be used throughout the season. Many of these resources are also available on our website, **nbfastpitch.org**.

COACH CHECKLIST

- ☐ Accept email invitation from MN Softball (section 1)
- ☐ Register for USA Softball account (section 2)
- ☐ Complete Background Check on USA Softball site (section 3)
- ☐ Complete Safe Sport Training on USA Softball site (section 3)
- ☐ Complete ACE Training on USA Softball site (section 3)
- ☐ Complete Concussion Training on MN Softball site (section 3)
- ☐ Upload all applicable training certificates and background check to MN Softball site (section 4)
- ☐ Distribute individual tryout scores to players (section 5)
- ☐ Submit "equipment wish list" (section 6)
- ☐ Sign up for additional tournaments, if applicable (section 7)

1. MN SOFTBALL INVITATION

Once the board has added you to a team within MN Softball, you will receive an email invitation. Please follow the link within the email to accept the invitation. This will allow you access to your team on the **mnsoftball.com** website.

2. USA SOFTBALL PROFILE

All coaches must be registered with USA Softball before being able to complete any of the training courses. If you have not already done so, please create your free profile at **registerusasoftball.com**.

3. BACKGROUND CHECKS, ACE, SAFESPORT AND CONCUSSION TRAINING

Every coach must complete and turn in a background check prior to the first team practice. There are no exceptions. Background checks are \$22.00 if purchased individually and \$36.00 if purchased along with the ACE training package. All coaches should complete both the background check, ACE, Safe Sport and Concussion training. Team Managers and parent helpers are only required to complete the background check.

- a. Go to registerusasoftball.com.
 - If you **already have an account**, enter your username and password under Login.
 - If you **don't have an account**, enter your Name, birthday and zip code. Fill in all required info on next page. (Note: Select MN-Minnesota for Association and Minn JO (Youth)-Play for Group and Minnesota Softball for League.) Click Submit. Enter your username and password under Login. Click Save at the bottom of the next page. Click Verify & Save in the pop-up box.

Login

Username:

Password:

[Forgot Username or Password?](#)
[Retrieve Login with ID Card](#)

Login

Think you may already have an account or want to create one?

First Name

Last Name

Birthday

Zip Code

- b. On the HomePlate page, scroll down and click on the ACE Education tab. Click Purchase under ACE Purchase Status.

Background Check | **ACE Education** | SafeSport | Registration Status

ACE Education

Welcome to the new ACE Testing Dashboard. Below are links to the ACE Testing Center, review previous tests, and if you have previous ACE tests completed a table of collected information pertaining to prior ACE Education.

SafeSport (view SafeSport tab above for more info)
Beginning in the 2018 season, **all ACE coaches must first complete SafeSport for the season prior to starting ACE.**

2361153 Matt Jenson 2023 Status:

<p>ACE Purchase Status</p> <p>You are now eligible to purchase the ACE exam. Please click the button below to complete the purchase process.</p> <p>Purchase</p>	<p>Test Availability</p> <p>ACE Status: No Previous ACE. Level 1 Now Available for Purchase.</p>	<p>ACE Test Review</p> <p>After completing an ACE exam, the videos along with supporting documentation will be made available to you for all ACE Levels you have completed.</p> <p>Review</p>
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- Click ACE w/Background in the pop-up box.

Are you an Umpire or Coach? ✕

You are in the process of purchasing the **ACE Education** exam with background check. If you are an **Umpire** and do not plan on coaching this season, please click the 'Background Only' button below.

****NOTE**** The ACE option includes a background check that is covered by the exam fee. Refunds are not given after the background check has been initiated. To continue with ACE, please click the 'ACE w/ Background' button below.

Umpires that do not plan on coaching, click the 'Background Only' button to continue with your purchase.

[ACE w/ Background](#) [Background Only](#)

- Enter your SSN, credit card info and check the Terms box. Click Submit Payment & Start Background Check box. (If you pay for this out of pocket, please request reimbursement from the North Branch Fastpitch Board (email ejenson@nbfastpitch.org) once your background check has cleared.)
- IMPORTANT:** You will receive an email from USA Softball with the subject line “USA Softball Invitation for Background Screening” which you will need to take action on. This email may go to your junk folder. When you receive the email click the link that says “Click here to begin.”
- The following day, log in to your account at registerusasoftball.com. Scroll down to the bottom and click “Please check here for available 2024 Background Check and/or ACE card(s).”

Background Check | **ACE Education** | SafeSport | Registration Status

Background Checks

Get all of your background check information here!
Free 2023 USA Softball Digital Rulebook!

If you need to take your ACE exam click on the ACE Education tab to purchase ACE with a background

Please [check here](#) for available 2023 Background Check and/or ACE card(s).

- f. If a card appears stating you have passed your background check, you can continue with the process below. If it isn't available yet, please continue to check back.
- g. Once you have passed your background check, click on the SafeSport tab and click on the appropriate button to get started. Note the 3 trainings will take 1-2 hours to complete but **MUST** be completed prior to the start of the season.

[Help Guide: How to Start and Complete SafeSport](#)

In order to be compliant with the SafeSport requirement for the 2023 season, only one course (as outlined on page 9 of the guide) must have a completion date between 8/18/2022 and 8/31/2023.

Ready to get started?

SafeSport First Time User - Account Creation

SafeSport Returning User Login

- h. Once you've completed Safe Sport training, you will need to go to MN Softball and upload your SafeSport certification before you can proceed. (See section 4 below.)
- i. Once your SafeSport certification has been approved, you can complete your ACE certification by clicking on the ACE Education tab and click the link under Test Availability. Proceed with the certification.

ACE Purchase Status	Test Availability	ACE Test Review
You have already purchased an ACE exam. Please check the status of your ACE exam located to the right of this message. Already Paid	ACE Status: Level 1 Pre-Test. Level 1 Now Available. Click Here to Enter or Resume the ACE Exam Receipt: 475425	After completing an ACE exam, the videos along with supporting documentation will be made available to you for all ACE Levels you have completed. Review

- j. To complete your Concussion training, go to <https://mnsoftball.com/pages/cms/concussion> and complete any one of the three concussion trainings listed. Links are provided on the page.



MINNESOTA SOFTBALL

CONCUSSION

In 2011, the State of Minnesota passed a new law, requiring, among other things, that ALL youth athletic coaches and officials receive training on concussions. Once completed, training is valid for three (3) years, after which, training must be completed again, and a new certificate of completion must be submitted.

We will accept Concussion Certificates from:

- Heads Up Coaches (CDC) <https://www.train.org/cdctrain/course/1089818/>
- National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) <https://nfhslearn.com/courses/concussion-in-sports-2>
- Trusted Coaches <https://www.trustedcoaches.org/courses/concussion/>

4. UPLOAD CERTIFICATIONS TO MNSOFTBALL

After all certifications are completed, you will need to upload them to the MN Softball website. Go to your dashboard at <https://www.mnsoftball.com/pages/dashboard>

- Click on the **Compliance** button next to your name.
 - Click on the compliance certificate you are going to upload.
 - Click on Upload New File.
 - Click on upload arrow icon.
 - Browse to the location of the Certificate/screenshot of certificate on your computer or phone.
 - Enter the Document's Expiration Date.
 - Click "Upload Document"
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5. DISTRIBUTE TRYOUT SCORES

A board member will provide your team's tryout scores to you. Please distribute these individually to the players on your team. **IMPORTANT:** Each player should receive only their score.

If you'd like, you can use this as an opportunity to discuss areas of focus for the season or help the player set goals.

Below is an example of the score spreadsheet you will receive for your team. The Outfield and Infield scores are out of 50 total points each. Hitting is out of 100. Running, Arm Strength and Exit Velocity are scored on a curve. The top speed receives 20 points and the remaining speeds are awarded points in decreasing increments from the top speed. The far right column calculates the player's overall score. (Speeds are provided on the spreadsheet but are grayed out because they are not specifically applied to the total Utility Score. Only the points in black are totaled.)

Player #	Player Name	Outfield	Infield	Hitting	Running	Running Points	Arm Strength	Arm Strength Points	Exit Velocity	Exit Velocity Points	Utility Score
212		33	34	97	3.69	14	49	17	55	20	215
226		29	36	95	3.72	13	49	17	55	20	210
221		33	38	95	3.77	12	49	17	51	16	211
220		36	37	89	3.5	17	49	17	46	11	207
222		33	38	90	3.47	18	49	17	50	15	211
203		38	39	89	3.96	6	51	19	50	15	206
204		35	34	92	3.41	19	52	20	41	6	206
201		33	41	81	3.41	19	45	13	44	9	196
228		32	32	86	3.63	15	42	10	51	16	191
207		34	34	86	3.71	13	40	8	49	14	189
208		30	34	86	4.09	4	46	14	54	19	187
219		36	37	75	3.74	13	41	9	44	9	179
Player #	Player Name	Pitching Score	Pitching Velocity	PV Points	Overall Pitching Score						
226		73	45	20	93						
221		65	41	16	81						
208		56	44	19	75						
Player #	Player Name	Catching Score	Pop up time	PT Points	Overall Catching Total						
220		110	2.6	20	130						
212		109	2.8	18	127						
203		108	2.8	18	126						
204		99	3.3	13	112						

6. EQUIPMENT WISH LIST

If your team needs any additional equipment or there is something you'd like the board to consider purchasing for your team, please send your request to jeilers@nbfastpitch.org.

7. EXTRA TOURNAMENTS

Each 10U, 12U and 14U team will be signed up for 2 intra-season tournaments in addition to the end-of-season Tri-County State Qualifier Tournament and the MN Softball State Tournament.

If your team would like to sign up for any additional tournaments, you may do so with the understanding that the fees must be covered by your team. Many tournaments are listed on the MN Softball website under Tournaments – Youth Fastpitch. Others are only listed on the host's website. Tournaments fill up very quickly so you'll want to sign up ASAP.

Please contact ejenson@nbfastpitch.org if you'd like to have the players individually invoiced for their portion of any team-paid tournament fees. If you'd prefer to collect the money on your own, you may do that as well.

8. CANCELLED/RESCHEDULED GAMES

If you need to reschedule a home game, please text the umpire coordinator (Erin Jenson 651-747-6563) as soon as possible so she can inform the umpire of the cancelled game and ensure an umpire is available for the rescheduled date

9. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- If you want to protest another player's eligibility at a post-season tournament, you must pay \$200 cash up front. If the player is found to be ineligible, you will receive the \$200 back. If they are eligible, you will forfeit the money. This payment will not be covered by NBFA.
 - For all games, the home team provides 1 new and 1 "very good" game ball. During doubleheaders, each team is responsible for game balls when they are playing as the home team. The Host team will be the home team during the first game; the opponent will be the home team for the second game. Please note the new balls are for games only and should not be removed from their packaging and used for practices. If you need more game balls, please contact kpell@nbfastpitch.org.
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NBFA POLICIES

I. COACH EXPECTATIONS (from NBFA Code of Conduct)

Coaching Philosophy and Requirements

The most vital component in accomplishing NBFA's goals stated in our Code of Conduct is GOOD COACHING. A successful youth coach will temper the ideal with the practical, will have a sound knowledge of fastpitch, and will be able to teach the players of this age in an appropriate way. He or she must have ample time to devote to the program and should have previous fastpitch experience.

The NBFA Board has established four priorities for our coaches:

1. To teach the fundamentals of fastpitch
2. To build character and self-esteem
3. To encourage team unity
4. To enforce the policies set forth in this handbook uniformly

Coaches should encourage team building and support team unity during practices and games. We encourage coaches to develop the talents of all the players. While coaching to win is acceptable if done properly, winning should not be overemphasized at the expense of the mission and goals of the program. All coaches selected must understand the philosophy of the NBFA program, as outlined in this document, and coach in accordance with it. It is the Board's responsibility to ensure all coaches are aware and understand the mission and goals of the program as outlined herein.

Coaches Responsibilities:

A coach is responsible for the operation and conduct of his/her team. He/she is the teacher of skills and a developer of players, socially, morally, psychologically and physically. The coach is responsible to the NBFA Board of Directors. These responsibilities include:

- The coach (or team manager appointed by the coach) is responsible for maintaining communication with families regarding practices and game schedules, as well as changes to stated times.
- Enforce common rules regarding care of equipment and facilities which include the following:
 1. Restrain the players from damaging the fields and property
 2. Maintaining clean dugouts free from debris such as water bottles, trash, etc.
 3. Safeguard all facilities and equipment utilized
 4. Put away all field equipment at the end of practice.
- Team coaches will maintain a minimal medical supplies inventory which is provided by NBFA. If no emergency medical personnel are available, the coach or his/her assistant should follow recommended medical procedures. However, in any and all situations, the parent has the ultimate responsibility.
- Coaches will refrain from the use of tobacco products during game and practice situations. Coaches will also refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages prior to and during games and practice situations.

****A coach who continually violates the NBFA guidelines shall have the following measures taken:**

1. Be addressed by the Program Director
2. If actions are still unacceptable, be addressed by the NBFA Board
3. If actions are still unacceptable, be dismissed by the NBFA Board and a suitable replacement will be named in the interim

Coaches and Assistant coaches are expected to:

1. Attend practices, games and tournament events.
2. Show concern for player safety and well-being.
3. Be consistent and fair; establish trust.
4. Be organized and prepared for all practices, games, and events.
5. Model behavior that is consistent with the NBFA mission, philosophy and values.
6. Teach and provide fast pitch knowledge to the best of your ability.
7. Increase knowledge/skills through clinics and other resources.
8. Encourage open, two-way communication with parents and players.
10. Submit to and pass a background check and complete ACE, Safe Sport and concussion training.

II. PICKUP PLAYER POLICY

North Branch Fastpitch Player Eligibility & Substitute Policy

North Branch Fastpitch is committed to providing a high-quality experience for all youth athletes participating in our program. The organization serves players from the 8U through 14U divisions. Teams are formed each Spring and Fall based on player registration within the North Branch community. The following eligibility criteria apply:

Eligibility Criteria:

- **Residents of North Branch**
- **Students attending North Branch Schools**
- **Waiver from the home association**, if the player does not meet the above two criteria.

RSVP and Attendance:

It is imperative that players RSVP for all games and practices via the team's application platform. This will allow coaches to verify attendance and ensure that the team can field a minimum roster of 9 players for each game. Please note that per MNUSA regulations, teams with fewer than 8 players will be required to forfeit the game.

Age and Division Requirements:

Players must compete in the appropriate age division according to their birthdate. For example, a player who is eligible for 14U based on their birthdate may not participate in the 12U division. No player is permitted to play down a division unless they meet the age eligibility requirements established by MNUSA Softball.

- No Player in a "B" Division shall be permitted to play in a same age lower division - "C" Division.

Substitute Player Policy:

Coaches may request substitute players as necessary throughout the season. The following process will be used to secure substitutes:

1. **Initial Substitute Requests:** Requests for substitute players should first be directed to the coach coordinator, who will facilitate the process of selecting a substitute player.
2. **Internal Substitution:** Substitute players should be drawn from the existing rostered members within the organization. For example, if a 14U team requires a substitute, they should first pull from 12U players; 12U teams should seek substitutes from 10U teams, and so on.
3. **Secondary Substitute Requests:** If no suitable substitute is available within the organization, coaches may make a secondary request through the MNUSA substitute portal, seeking players from other MNUSA-rostered teams.
4. **Previous Season Players:** If no substitute is available through the above channels, coaches may consider players from the previous season who are not currently rostered but are willing to substitute. These may include athletes who participate in summer play but do not return for the fall season due to other commitments, players who have opted to take the season off after previously being on a team in our association, or players who have in another way been part of the association in the past.

Pro-Rated Registration Fees for Substitutes:

If a substitute player participates in more than 50% of a team's games during the season, that player will be required to pay pro-rated registration fees to ensure fairness and maintain the integrity of the program.

Player Selection for Non-Specialized Positions:

For positions other than pitcher or catcher, which require specialized skills, we will draw substitutes from a variety of players in the lower divisions. This ensures that no single player is consistently favored, and that all players have an opportunity to contribute in different roles.

*** All decisions are subject to board discretion***

Note: If an extra jersey is needed for your pickup player, please reach out to a board member so we can get one to you and keep record of any jerseys that are loaned out. Please ask the player to wash the jersey before returning.

BOARD MEMBER CONTACT INFO

Officers:

Katherine Pell, Executive Director and Interim Coach Coordinator
Bonnie Rediske, Assistant Executive Director

kpell@nbfastpitch.org
brediske@nbfastpitch.org

Gina Jepson, Secretary
Erin Jenson, Treasurer and Interim Umpire Coordinator
Jeff Eilers, Field and Equipment Coordinator

gjepson@nbfastpitch.org
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jeilers@nbfastpitch.org

At Large:

Alisha Roy, Uniforms and Sponsorships
Emily Adams, Fundraising
Kayde Arbogast, Photography and Social Media
Lance Arbogast, Parent Liaison and Technology
Michelle Kiffmeyer, 8U Coordinator

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