**North Branch FastPitch Association**

**Program Overview**

North Branch FastPitch Association (NBFA) is a **501(c)3** nonprofit organization established to provide an

opportunity for girls in the North Branch area to play the game of fastpitch softball, with emphasis on

sportsmanship and teamwork, in an atmosphere that is positive and constructive. This handbook covers

the Policies and Procedures of the program, along with the players, parents, and coaches that participate in them.

NBFA is governed by a volunteer board. For additional details see the North Branch FastPitch Association website (www.nbfastpitch.org).

**Mission Statement:**

NBFA is dedicated to developing student-athletes in the elements of competition, dedication, sportsmanship and teamwork.

**Philosophy:**

The philosophy of the NBFA Program is to allow each participant of the program an opportunity to improve

basic fastpitch softball skills (catch, throw, bat, pitch and base running).

● **Competition-** A successful team is defined by the improvements a team makes day to day,

week to week and game to game. We hope to teach our athletes to be humble and gracious in wins or losses.

● **Dedication-** Each athlete will be expected to attend each practice and competition. They will

also be expected to perform in the classroom and also follow the NBAPS rules.

● **Sportsmanship-** Is exemplified in the individual who recognizes the talents of others,

both teammates and opponents and applauds the efforts of both.

● **Teamwork-** Requires each person to understand that they are a part of the whole group and

each member must work together to accomplish a goal. It also involves recognizing our skills,

our limitations and contributing as best we can.

**PLAYER POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

**Player Eligibility:** NBFA is currently offered for girls age 6-19 as of September 1st of that year who either

reside or attend school in North Branch Independent School District #138. Deviation from the eligibility

guidelines require approval *by* the Board of Directors.

**Players are expected to:**

1. Provide proper equipment (glove, helmet, bat, shoes)

2. Attend practices and development events on a regular basis. Fast pitch is a team sport. Teams only

get better when they practice together.

a. Arrive 15 minutes early to practice (prep field, dress, warmup)

b. Notify the coach at least one day in advance when you can't attend. (Excessive absences will affect play time.)

3. Work hard, learn and HAVE FUN.

4. Demonstrate team concept - recognize and value everyone's contribution.

5. Be coachable: Learn to accept criticism without alibi and do your best to improve. Talk to your coach if

you have questions or concerns.

6. Show respect towards coach decisions in playing players in positions based on their skill level with the

top priority being safety. Playing time is based on the coach’s discretion.

7. Be supportive of teammates, coaches and officials.

8. Remain mentally "into" the game whether playing or not.

9. Motivate yourself and teammates, strive for excellence and work for the success of the team.

10. Participate in fundraising events.

11. Players are asked to remain on the team bench at all times during a game. Conversations with nonplayers

and parents should be avoided during the game. The job of all players is to watch the game, learn

from watching other players and be engaged during the game so they are prepared when asked to go into a game.

**Players' Code of Ethics:**

● I will make every effort to attend every practice and game.

● I will do my best at all practices and during all games.

● I will listen to my coaches while at practices and at games and make every effort to try to do

what they are asking of me.

● I will practice good sportsmanship by treating all players, coaches, parents and officials with respect.

● I will not use profanity. I understand that I will be warned for the first offense and, at the

discretion of the coach, can be suspended from play for the remainder of the current practice,

current game or for the following game.

● I will do my best to help my parents get me to games and practices on time.

● I understand that playing on a team is a privilege and that if my actions are detrimental to the

team or the association I can be removed.

● **•**I understand that improvement comes from practice

**Player Time Commitment:**

The NBFA strives to have 2 practices a week for 2 hours per practice during the start of the season. Once

games begin; the coaches can decide to drop practices to one practice per week. There will also be

weekend league play and tournaments. The school calendar and extracurricular activities can directly

affect field availability.

**Absences:**

Players or their parents are expected to notify the coach directly (please do not ask another player or

parent to give the coach a message, except in the case of an emergency) as far in advance as possible if

they are unable to attend a practice or a game. Any player who misses a practice or a game without an

authorized excuse, or without notifying your coach, may be excluded from playing in the next game at the

discretion of the coach. If excluded, the player is expected to dress for and attend the game.

**Student Athletes:**

NBFA believes it is very important for our players to be the very best student athletes they can, with the

student coming first. That said, players who do not meet the school's minimum grade guidelines are

expected to sit out of games until the grades meet minimum standards. NBFA expects players to conduct

themselves in an appropriate manner at school. Players who receive detention, or any school suspension

may be benched for a game. The burden for informing your child's coach of these matters’ rests with the

player and parents. No participants will be penalized or disciplinary action taken against them for legitimate

religious absences from practice or games.

**Substance Abuse:**

Regardless of the quantity, a player shall not:

1. Use or have a beverage containing alcohol

2. Use tobacco/vape

3. Use or consume, have in possession, buy, sell or give away any other controlled substance

(Including but not limited to vaping, steroids, etc.)

This rule applies to any portion of an activity season. It is not a violation for a player to be in

possession of a controlled substance specifically prescribed for the player's own use by his/her doctor. If

a player is found breaking this policy, the player will be given one warning and if found breaking

this policy after the warning is given, will be dismissed, with no refund.

**Opt out of playing/Drop out:**

After tryouts teams will be selected in a timely manner. After being notified of making a team you have 24

hours to notify the NBFA Director if you are no longer going to play to receive any refund minus your

try-out fee. Any player leaving the program or deciding not to play after that 24-hour period will not be

eligible for any refund without board approval.

**PARENT POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

**Parents' Code of Ethics:**

● I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches

and officials at every game, practice or other youth sports event.

● I will make every effort to ensure my child is at every practice and game.

● I will place the emotional and physical well-being of my child ahead of any personal desire to win.

● I will insist that my child play in a safe and healthy environment.

● I will provide support for coaches and officials working with my child to provide a positive, enjoyable experience for all.

● I will not coach my child or any other player during practice or a game, unless asked to do so by my child's coach.

● I will demand a drug, alcohol and tobacco-free environment for my child

● I will remember that the game is for children and not for adults.

● I will do my very best to make youth sports fun for my child.

● I will ask my child to treat other players, coaches, fans and officials with respect regardless of race, sex, creed or ability.

● I will promise to help my child enjoy the youth sports experience within my personal constraints

by assisting with coaching, being a respectful fan, providing transportation or whatever I am capable of doing.

● I understand that the NBFA reserves the right to dismiss at any time a player and/or their parents

who by their conduct significantly creates problems for the team/program or after verbal warning

continues to disrupt practices or games.

● I will assign responsibility for my child to a responsible adult if I am unable to be present at a game(s).

**Parents are expected to:**

1. Encourage your daughter and give positive statements about her play.

2. Show respect for players, coaches, other parents, opponents, officials, and the program.

3. If a problem or concern arises, notify the coach, the parent rep. or the program director. It is

recommended you wait a minimum of 24 hours "cooling down period” after an incident before

contacting a coach to express concerns. ***Under NO circumstances*** shall a parent approach

during competition or when other players or parents are present. NBFA encourages you to have

the first contact with the coach themselves. The parent, player, and coach will often resolve the

conflict and learn from the experience. We highly recommend you contacting the coach directly,

however, if you are uncomfortable contacting the coach directly, grievance forms are available

on the website and will be reported to the Board.

4. Model community values.

5. Assist with team activities; driving, fundraising, etc.

6. Assure players arrive on time (15 min. early for practice) and are picked up on time.

7. Be allowed to participate in board meetings during the initial open forum on the Agenda. If you have new business that you would like addressed,

please send an email to the Board 48 hours prior to the meeting the new business info you would like to have addressed.

8. No use of tobacco products or vaping will be allowed at any practices or games on or near the fields of play.

**\*\*Positive adult role models allow athletes to grow and accept challenges\*\***

**COACHING**

**Coaching Philosophy and Requirements**

The most vital component in accomplishing the goals stated above 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, matches, 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 concussion training.

\*

**North Branch FastPitch Association**

**Player, Parent Handbook SIGN OFF SHEET**

I have read the above and agree to the statements put forth by the North Branch FastPitch

Association. I promise to follow these guidelines and rules to the best of my ability. I also

accept any consequences put in place by NBFA for violation of the above policies.

DATE:

Player Printed Name

Player Signature

Parent Printed Name

Parent Signature

Coach Printed Name

Coach Signature