

ELV Bylaws

Section 1 - Name and Mission Statement

The Eastern Lehigh Valley Softball League (ELV) is a recreational youth softball league serving girls in Northampton County and surrounding areas. Our mission is to empower girls through the sport of softball and to impart the lifelong lessons of teamwork, sportsmanship, camaraderie, dedication, problem solving, and physical activity. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to learn these lessons in a safe and fun environment.

Section 2 - Membership/Eligibility and Participation

1. Participating Organizations
 - a. Must be a valid youth athletic organization within Northampton County or the surrounding areas offering a recreational softball program to its members.
 - b. Must have insurance
 - c. Must have a defined and approved territory
 - d. Process for accepting new organizations
 - i. Submit a letter of interest to join to the Board
 1. This letter must include a proposed territory. If that territory infringes on another organization's, rationale for why this territory should be approved must be included
 - ii. Attend a special meeting of the Executive Board to discuss
 - iii. Vote of participating organization must be approved by a simple majority
 - e. Process for removing participating organizations
 - i. Should a participating organization violate the bylaws of the ELV in a manner such that their continued participation in the league would be detrimental to the rest of the league, a special meeting of the Board will be held to discuss the case. The findings will be presented to representatives from each member organization for vote. A two thirds majority will be required to remove an organization from the league.
2. All players must be female and live within the boundaries of a participating organization or have an approved waiver on file with the league
 - a. A player's residence will be determined by the address on record by the school district where she attends/will attend school
3. All players who sign up to play ELV softball for a participating organization must be placed on a team. There will be no tryouts or cuts for any team in the ELV.
 - a. Failure to abide by this will result in an organization's suspension from the league for a period of not less than one (1) year. Repeat offenses will result in expulsion from the league.
 - b. Should a participating organization choose to offer in house co-ed T-ball this will not be considered a violation or the bylaws

Section 3 - Government and Elections

1. Voting Rights
 - a. Each member organization will have one vote on league matters.

- i. Voting rights will be suspended if an organization is in violation of the ELV bylaws. Voting rights will be reinstated once the violation is addressed and corrective action has been taken.
 - ii. Should there be issues with continued violations, the Executive Board reserves the right to assess fines against offending organization(s). Voting rights will not be reinstated until all fines are paid.
- b. Each team will have one vote on all divisional matters.

Section 4 - Board of Director Responsibilities

1. The Executive Board shall be composed of League Officers and statisticians from each playing level
 - a. League Officers are elected and will include President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.
 - i. League officers will be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting following the conclusion of fall ball
 - ii. Elections will take place via secret ballot
 - iii. Terms will be two years and President and Secretary will be elected in even years and Vice President and Treasurer will be elected in odd years
 1. Should anyone resign their position, a special election will be held to find a replacement for the remainder of the term
 - b. Playing level statisticians - duties are as follows:
 - i. Appointed by the League Officers at the first yearly meeting
 - ii. One at each playing level - statisticians must have a thorough knowledge of the rules of their assigned level
 - iii. Collecting and recording all scores
 - iv. Publishing up-to-date standings on a weekly basis
 - v. Game schedule - the statistician shall have sole authority for ruling upon cancellation of games for non-weather related purposes. The statistician is also responsible for coordinating the schedule for playoffs and all star games.
 - vi. Act as an umpire liaison for the league at the designated age level, recording umpire no shows and complaints
 - vii. Playing level statisticians may not also be a coach in that level
 - c. The Executive Board will have the responsibility to rule upon all member disputes, rule interpretations, protests, disciplinary matters, roster reviews, player eligibility, waivers and stacking violations.
 - i. Should an Executive Board member be directly involved in or be deemed to have a conflict of interest with the matter being addressed, that member will not take part in the discussion or voting.
 - d. Should a League Officer assume the additional duty of statistician, an additional member shall be elected to the Executive Board from the general membership.
2. The Executive Board may create additional committees to help with the organization and improvement of the league as deemed necessary.
3. No more than two (2) elected League Officers from any member organization may serve at the same time.

Section 5 - Organizational Meetings

1. Organizational meetings will be held on the 4th Sunday of the month at 6pm.
 - a. An effort will be made to offer a remote option for attendance at these meetings
2. All organizational representatives must attend these meetings. If an organizational representative is unable to attend, they may send an alternate in their place.
 - a. Lack of representation at two of these meetings will result in loss of voting rights.
3. Each individual team must be represented by either the head or assistant coach at the April and August meetings
 - a. Coaches that miss meetings may be deemed ineligible to coach in future seasons.

Section 6 - Fees and Insurance

1. League fees will be set by the league each season and must be paid by participating organizations prior to the start of the season. League fees will be used to pay the fees incurred by the ELV
2. All member organizations are required to present their certificate of liability insurance to the league prior to the start of the season.
3. Any indebtedness of participating organizations must be paid prior to the start of the new season in order to participate.

Section 7 - Playing Levels

1. Players will be placed into the appropriate division based on their current grade level
2. Recreational Divisions will be as follows:
 - a. T-ball
 - b. Coach Pitch
 - c. Minors
 - d. Majors
 - e. Juniors
 - f. Seniors
3. Organizations may choose to roster players above their designated grade level if their skill deems them more appropriate for the next level
4. No player will be allowed to play below their designated level
5. The ELV may support advanced play at the 8u, 10u, 12u and 14u levels if there is interest and sufficient players
 - a. Players who participate in advanced play must also be rostered and actively participate on a recreational team

Section 8 - Team Formation

1. If an organization has more than one team at a given level Minors and above, the team formation process shall be aimed at forming balanced teams of equal talent.
2. All organizations are expected to have an evaluation and team formation/draft process reviewed by and on file with Executive Board
 - a. Evaluation scores, including pitching scores, may be requested by the Executive Board at any time. Falsified evaluation scores will result in an organization being suspended for no less than one year. Second offenses will result in expulsion from the league.

- b. A mechanism must be in place to monitor equality of the teams through the draft process
 - c. Players may not be ceded to an individual coach prior to the team formation/draft process
 - d. Players may not be automatically kept together from season to season - all players must be drafted in accordance with the organization's team formation/draft rules.
 - e. Coaches may not coach together if it creates an imbalance in pitching distribution
3. Rosters may be submitted as soon as the team formation/draft process is complete. Rosters will be shared with Organization Representatives. Organization Representatives may share these rosters with level coordinators and coaches for review.
- a. No individual team practices may be held prior to submission of the rosters.
 - i. Any violation of this rule will result in the offending coach being ruled ineligible to coach during the current season.
 - ii. Organizations who are only fielding one team at an age level may hold practices prior to roster submission provided all players reside within their territory.
 - b. Any concerns regarding the rosters should be voiced to the Executive Board immediately for review
 - c. The Executive Board has the authority to require a redraft or restructuring of the affected team(s) should they feel that the team formation rules have been violated. The affected coach(es) and organizational representative will be given the opportunity to explain the results of the team formation/draft process.
4. Stacking is defined as a wide disparity in win-loss records between the best and worst teams fielded by an organization at a given age level. Stacking of teams is strictly prohibited.
- a. The maximum differential in final standings may not exceed seven (7) games in a 12-game schedule
 - b. Should a stacking violation occur, the organizational representative and affected coaches will be invited to a special meeting of the Executive Board to explain the situation
 - i. Should an Executive Board member coach a team at the same level, an alternate will be chosen to replace that person for those meetings
 - c. The penalty for a stacking violation will be loss of playoff eligibility for the offending team(s)
5. Waivers
- a. If a player wants to play for a different organization than the one serving them, a waiver must be submitted for approval by the ELV Board
 - b. Waivers between member organizations should be for special circumstances only. For example: problem(s) between members of an individual association that would cause harm to the player
 - c. Waivers should be approved from the home organization first prior to a player being rostered at the new league.

- d. Waivers for players outside of a designated ELV territory may be obtained for special circumstances. For example: divorced households, business owners, relatives who assist with childcare, etc where the player spends significant time in an ELV territory but does not attend school there.
- e. All waivers must be submitted no later than the time of roster submission for approval
 - i. If a waiver is granted, it shall be good for one playing year.
 - ii. Any ineligible player may not participate in games. The results of any game with an ineligible player will be amended and considered a forfeit by the offending team.
- f. Any waiver request that is denied may be appealed by the player's family directly to the Executive Board for review
- g. If any organization does not have enough girls to field a team at a given level, those players are allowed to play for another organization. A waiver must be filed with the league and will be valid for only one year.

Section 9 - Game Schedules

- 1. All regularly scheduled games must be played when indicated on the schedule
- 2. The statistician must give permission to cancel any game (with the exception of weather) prior to the game being canceled. It is the statistician's responsibility to contact the umpires and reschedule the game.
 - a. Any game that is rescheduled without permission will be considered a forfeit by the team initiating the reschedule. The forfeiting team will also be responsible to pay the umpire's show up fee.

Section 10 - Conduct, Discipline and Grievances

- 1. All parent or coaches complaints that are received by any member of the Executive Board will be remanded to the participating organizational representative for resolution.
- 2. Parents have no equity in the operation of the league, its rules or its bylaws, outside of how those rules and bylaws affect their child.
- 3. The Executive Board may suspend any member coach or player for a period of one (1) game without appeal by the offending coach or player. A suspension of longer than one (1) game may be appealed to the Executive Board, who then will conduct a hearing on the offense and suspension.

Section 12 - Amendments

- 1. All amendments to these bylaws shall be approved by a majority vote at two (2) consecutive meetings of the general membership. Each member organization in good standing will have one vote.

