



# J.O. REFERENCE GUIDE 2018

## *A guide for USA Softball of PA Commissioners, Staff & Teams*

### **PREFACE**

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*This document is designed to be a comprehensive guide for everyone associated with the **USA Softball of PA Junior Olympic** program and a resource for our staff and our teams. Periodic updates and revisions will be made as deemed necessary. It is important that this information be communicated to our JO community and I encourage USA Softball of PA Staff and others to direct their teams to our website: [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org) to view the pdf file containing this information. This information has been compiled for the sole purpose of providing general information for the USA Softball of PA Junior Olympic (JO) program.*

*For the purpose of clarity "USA" used alone refers to the National Organization; "USA Softball of PA" refers to the Pennsylvania local association which is, of course, part of the National Organization.*

*Comments, suggestions, recommendations for updating and/or correcting any of this information is encouraged. Contact Suzanne Robison or the State Office with your input.*

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### **USA SOFTBALL**



**USA Softball** is a volunteer driven, not-for-profit organization based in Oklahoma City, OK, which was founded in 1933 and has evolved into the strongest softball organization in the country. The growth and development of USA led the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) to name USA the "National Governing Body of Softball", pursuant to the Amateur Sports Act of 1978.

The USA has many important responsibilities as the national governing body of softball in the United States, including regulating competition to insure fairness and equal opportunity to the millions of players who annually play the sport.

When the USA entered the softball picture in 1933, the sport was in a state of confusion with no unified set of playing rules and no national governing body to provide guidance and stability. The USA changed all that by adopting softball's first universally accepted rules of play and by organizing consistent and fair competition across the nation.

USA has become one of the nation's largest and fastest growing sports organizations and now sanctions competition in every state through a network of 73 local associations. The USA has grown from a few hundred teams in the early days to over 250,000 teams today representing a membership of more than four million.

For more info, visit the USA National Website: [www.usasoftball.com](http://www.usasoftball.com)

## USA SOFTBALL OF PENNSYLVANIA

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**USA SOFTBALL OF PA** refers to the Pennsylvania “local association” which includes all counties in the state. Philadelphia Metro is its own “local association” separate from USA Softball of PA.



The USA Softball of PA is the trademarked property of the national USA organization. Pennsylvania typically ranks in the top 4 associations in the nation for USA youth registrations.

Pennsylvania is divided into 16 **Districts**. A District Commissioner is appointed to each district. The District Commissioner then appoints a staff consisting of Deputy District Commissioner(s), JO Commissioner(s), Deputy JO Commissioner(s), UIC's, etc.

A complete list of USA Softball of PA Staff can be found on our website at [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org).

It is important for all leagues/teams to know who their District Commissioner and/or District JO Commissioner is. Their signatures are required on various Official USA forms which will be discussed later in this guide.

Districts are grouped into 4 Areas: Northeast, Southeast, Central and West. Each area is directed by an Area VP and other staff.

On the National level, USA Softball of PA is part of the Northeast Region (Region 1) (effective 1/1/2016) and the Eastern Territory. (see “Region” and “Territory” in Definitions for more info)

## USA SOFTBALL OF PA EXECUTIVE STAFF

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State Commissioner.....	Andrew Loechner
President.....	Jeff Sell
Executive Director.....	Bill Robison
Deputy State Commissioner.....	David Persing
Treasurer/REGISTERUSA Administrator.....	Suzanne Robison
Secretary.....	Peggy Loechner
State JO Commissioner.....	Suzanne Robison
State Umpire in Chief.....	Luau Bowers

## **DEFINITIONS OF COMMON TERMS**

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**ACE Certification** – ACE Coaching Certification Program offered by USA. The ACE (Aspire, Challenge, Encourage) Coaching Certification Program is a certification program developed and designed to provide softball coaches of all levels – from beginning coaches to experienced veterans – an opportunity to certify as a coach with a national softball organization. Travel/tournament teams participating in championship play tournaments must have at least one (1) ACE Certified coach present for all games.

**Advanced Play** – Any tournament through which a team may qualify to advance to Championship Play, i.e., State Championships, Eastern National Qualifier, USA National Qualifier, USA Hall of Fame Qualifier, Regional Qualifier, Territory Qualifiers. Championship tournaments (USA Nationals and/or Eastern Nationals) are also considered “Advanced Play”.

**Championship Play** – The highest level of “Advanced Play”: USA Nationals or one of the Territory National Championship tournaments, i.e., Northern, Southern, Eastern or Western National Championships. Pennsylvania is part of the Eastern Territory.

**Classification of Play** – Age and Classification –

- **Travel/Tournament Teams** - Must be one of the following:
  - **Class “A”** – 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U
  - **Class “B”** – 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U
- **GOLD** – 16U & 18U
- **Recreational Teams** - Class “C” – 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U
- More on Classifications later in this guide.

**Code** – refers to the USA Softball National Code, which, along with the Official Rules of Softball and Procedure Manual provides the guidelines and regulations of play for the sport of softball for all divisions. To view the National Code, go to [www.usasoftball.com](http://www.usasoftball.com) and click on “about USA” and then “USA Code”.

**USA PA Code** – refers to the USA Softball of Pennsylvania Code. To view the USA Softball of PA Code, go to [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org).

**District Commissioner** – Pennsylvania is divided into 16 Districts. Every District is assigned a District Commissioner, Deputy District Commissioner(s), JO Commissioner(s), Deputy JO Commissioner(s), Umpire-In-Chief/s (UIC’s), etc.

**Division of Play** –

- “Girls’ Fast Pitch” is a “Division of Play”
- “Girls’ Slow Pitch” is a “Division of Play”

**Individual Registration** – Registration of each individual player, coach, manager and other team personnel which includes USA registration and USA insurance. Individual Registration is required for all PA travel teams participating in USA Championship Play tournaments. To individually register a team or league go to [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org) and click on the “Individual Registration” or “REGISTERUSA” link.

**Junior Olympic or “JO”** – USA’s Youth Program, which includes 10UA, 12UA, 14UA, 16UA, 18UA, 10UB, 12UB, 14UB, 16UB, 18UB, 16U Gold, 18U Gold and Class C Recreational Level teams.

**JO Independent Travel Team Registration** – A registration process for those teams that purchase insurance other than through our individual registration process. Those teams must provide a copy of their roster and an insurance certificate equivalent to USA Softball accident and liability insurance provided under the individual registration. These teams are eligible to participate in invitational tournaments and the **USA Softball of PA State Championships ONLY**. If the teams choose to participate in USA Softball Eastern Nationals or Nationals they must follow the USA Softball code and complete the individual registration process. All coaches must adhere to the USA of PA requirements of one coach must be ACE Certified and all coaches on the field or in the dugouts must have a “cleared” USA Background Clearance.

**Local Association** – according to USA terminology, “Local Association” refers to each State or Metro Association, for example: USA Softball of PA is the “Local Association” for the State of Pennsylvania which is further divided into 16 districts mentioned earlier in this guide.

**Official USA Championship Roster** – is also referred to as the “Official USA Softball” or “USA Roster”. It also serves as Liability Waiver & Indemnification Form and so must bear the signature of the responsible party for each rostered player. ***If players are under 18 years old, a parent’s signature is required.*** See “Official Championship Roster” section later in this guide for more information.

**Official Tournament Entry Form** – An official USA document, this Entry Form is required for all advanced play tournaments, eastern nationals or nationals. **IMPORTANT NOTE: For Pennsylvania JO teams advancing to USA Nationals or Eastern Nationals, this form must be generated and signatures acquired by the State JO Commissioner.**

**Pickup Player** – A player who is not a rostered member of the team for which they are being “picked up”. A maximum of (3) Pickup players are permitted for National, Eastern National & State Championships only with a maximum of 20 players including the pickup players.. ***Rules governing eligible pickup players are discussed later in this guide.***

**Pick-Up Player Form** – Official USA document showing pick-up player’s data (name, DOB, address, etc.), which must be signed by State JO Commissioner, and submitted to Championship tournament staff before that player may participate. ***Rules governing eligible pickup players are discussed later in this guide.***

**Playing Rules / USA Official Rules of Softball / Participant Manual** – distributed to all USA Registered teams and includes all rules governing USA softball. USA Softball of PA teams are also provided with an USA scorebook and “Softball for You” booklet. See also USA Code for additional regulations and guidelines pertaining to the sport of softball. Teams should contact their District Commissioner if they did not receive a copy of the rule book.

**Recreational Team/League** – the lowest level of competitive softball with teams competing at the metro/county/community level only. Also referred to as **Class “C”/REC** teams under USA Softball of PA Junior Olympic terminology. Traditionally an instructional and fun level of play. Leagues may establish their own rules deviating from USA rules such as batting all players, limiting bunting, sliding and stealing at the younger ages, etc.

**Region** – USA SOFTBALL OF PA is part of Region 1, the Northeast Region, which also includes: Philadelphia Metro, New York, New York City, New Jersey, Newark Metro, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

**REGISTERUSA** – USA’s individual registration program which includes USA membership and accident/liability insurance coverage available for all players, coaches, and staff. USA Background Checks and ACE Certification for coaches and adult staff is processed through REGISTERUSA.

**Roster** – See “Official USA Championship Roster”.

**Standard Roster** – A non-official document listing all players on a team. A standard roster is available through REGISTERUSA for individually registered teams. A Standard Roster IS NOT acceptable for advanced or championship tournaments. See “Official USA Championship Roster”.

**Territory** – USA Softball of PA is part of the Eastern Territory which includes: Maine, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, D.C., Virginia, Delaware, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Philadelphia Metro and North Carolina.

**Travel/Tournament Team** – Teams that participate in USA sanctioned tournament events including invitational, advanced play and championship play tournaments (State Championships, Qualifiers, National Championships)

## **WHY REGISTER WITH USA SOFTBALL OF PA?**

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- Become a member of one of USA's top 4 associations in the nation for youth registrations.
- **USA's Junior Olympic (JO)** program benefits players in all age groups: 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U and 18U players.
- When your entire organization individually registers and insures with USA Softball of PA, liability insurance is extended to cover your **Organization's Officers**.
- With USA individual registration and insurance, your organization is issued a **“Certificate of Liability”** and you can obtain additional certificates for your practice or playing facilities at no additional charge to you or the facility's owner utilizing the “Additional Insured”.
- When you register your entire league, USA Softball of PA provides a **plaque** for every 10 teams in your league which you can use as you deem appropriate: award to your teams, sponsors, MVPs, or whatever.
- We provide **USA Rule Books, Scorebooks** and USA Softball of PA **“Softball For You”** books for all registered teams.
- USA offers a **stringent background check** for all adult members of your organizations for a nominal fee.
- USA offers a Coach's Certification program (ACE) for any coach. An USA Background Check is included in the certification.
- USA serves both **travel/tournament teams and recreational organizations** in both Slow Pitch and Fast Pitch.
- USA categorizes Fast Pitch travel teams so that your teams are competing at a comparable level as other teams within your classification.
- USA also has a **“GOLD”** classification for our elite 16U and 18U players.
- With USA individual registration, insurance, Background checks and ACE certification, your team is **eligible to participate in USA's Advanced Play tournaments**.
- With USA Softball of PA Independent JO Travel Team Registration, Background Checks and Ace certification your team is **eligible to participate in USA Softball of PA State Championship tournament and invitational tournaments**.
- USA Softball of PA offers a **variety of competitive tournament** scenarios: invitationals, qualifiers and Championship tournaments at the State, Regional, Territorial and National levels.
- You can **purchase Dudley softballs – the official softball of USA Softball of PA** – from your District Commissioner at a discounted price.
- USA Softball of PA offers the **Loechner Scholarship** to provide financial assistance to outstanding undergraduate

students enrolled or planning to enroll at any Penn State University campus. Children of USA members or those who are themselves members of the USA Softball of PA are eligible to apply. Visit our website [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org) for details.

- USA offers an individual registration program which includes **accident and liability insurance** for every registered player or coach. See "REGISTERUSA" later in this guide for more information.

## **USA INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION – "REGISTERUSA"**

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- **Benefits:**
  - Includes USA membership and accident & liability insurance
  - Players are insured to play on any USA-registered team no matter where they play softball
  - Registered players are eligible pickup players for the same or higher classification team for Championship play
  - Options of \$125 deductible or \$250 deductible
  - USA Photo ID's available for tournament/travel teams; non-photo ID's for rec-level teams.
  - "**Certificate of Liability**" is available for your team and your practice or playing facilities at no additional charge to you or the facility's owner.
- All USA Softball of PA Junior Olympic Tournament/Travel teams are required to individually register players and coaches to be eligible to play in advanced play tournaments (Eastern Nationals/Nationals).
- Individual Registration is highly recommended for all league/recreational teams. Recreational level players who are individually registered are eligible pick-up players for Championship play.
- Individual registration with USA Insurance is required for all PA teams participating in any USA advanced play tournament (Eastern Nationals/Nationals).
- Individually registered players are insured to play on any USA-registered team within the guidelines of championship and advanced play.
- Players who participate on a tournament/travel team *and* at the recreational level must be individually registered with their travel team.
- Recreational level players are eligible Pickup Players for championship play ONLY IF they are individually registered.
- Players may appear on only one (1) Championship Roster within a division of play in any one (1) season.
- REGISTERUSA Photo ID cards are **highly recommended** for all travel teams participating at any level.
- Photo ID cards are **required** for all teams participating in USA National Championship tournaments.
- USA Background checks are **required** for all coaches & adult members of teams. NOTE: Beginning in 2015, all individuals in direct contact with youth must have Pennsylvania Background Clearances – it is the law.
- Teams must have at least one (1) ACE Certified coach present at all advanced play & championship play games.
- Teams must register with the State/Metro Association where the majority of their players reside.

## **CLASSIFICATIONS**

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### **18U GOLD**

- MUST be individually registered through REGISTERUSA
- Players may be recruited from anywhere in US.
- NO College players
- 18U Class A teams may participate in 18U Gold Qualifiers providing that they have NO College players rostered.
  - Qualifies – reclassified as 18U Gold for remainder of season
  - Doesn't Qualify – may return and play at 18U A level.

### **16U GOLD**

- MUST be individually registered through REGISTERUSA
- 16U Class A teams may participate in 16U Gold Qualifiers
  - Qualifies – reclassified as 16U Gold for remainder of season
  - Doesn't Qualify – may return and play at 16U A Level

### **Class A Travel/Tournament Teams (10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U)**

- MUST be individually registered through REGISTERUSA to be eligible to play in advanced play tournaments (Eastern Nationals/Nationals) or JO Independent Travel Team Registration (mut provide proof of insurance equal to USA Softball's issued insurance).
- Players may be drawn from multiple PA counties or from bordering metro/state associations.
- Class A teams may participate ONLY at the Class A level except as noted above for 16U & 18U Gold.

### **Class B Travel/Tournament Teams (10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U)**

- MUST be individually registered through REGISTERUSA or JO Independent Travel Team Registration (must provide proof of insurance equal to USA Softball's issued insurance).
- Majority of players must be drawn from within the team's home USA Softball of PA District.
- Teams recruiting players from across established PA district boundaries must obtain approval from State JO Commissioner EXCEPT if all players participate in the same USA Softball of PA rec league.
- May participate in Class "A" tournaments, but are then subject to being reclassified to Class "A" for the remainder of the season based on their ability to compete against Class "A" teams.
- May be subject to be reclassified to an "A" team if level of competitiveness appears to exceed that of a typical Class "B" team.

### **Class C (10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, 18U)**

- Teams participating at the Community/Recreational (League Play) level only.
- May individually register through REGISTERUSA (Recommended) or may "team/league register" through their respective USA Softball of PA League.
- Class C (rec) players may be eligible pickup players for Class A or Class B travel/teams in Championship Play ONLY if they are individually registered through REGISTERUSA.

## RECLASSIFICATION

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- USA Softball of PA reserves the right to reclassify a team based on the above criteria and the following:
- As a general rule, “If you play up, you stay up”, that is, teams who play at the higher classification may be subject to reclassification to the higher classification for the remainder of the season IF:
  - The team performs at .500 or better in the higher level tournament, and/or
  - The team qualifies for Advanced or Championship play at the higher level tournament.
  - Examples:
    - 12U Class B Team participates in 12U Class A tournament and goes 4-3. Team may be reclassified as a Class A team for remainder of season.
    - 12U Class A team participates at 14U Class A tournament and goes 0-4. Team will not be reclassified.
    - 14U Class B team participates in 14U A State Championships. Team will be reclassified as a 14U Class A team for remainder of season. Team may advance to 14U Class A Eastern Nationals, but may not participate in 14U Class B Eastern Nationals.
  - **EXCEPTION:** 16U Class A teams & 18U Class A teams may participate in their respective age’s GOLD Qualifier. If the team does not qualify, they may return and play at their respective Class A again.
- Class A teams may not participate at the Class B level.

## LOECHNER SCHOLARSHIP

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USA Softball of PA offers the **Loechner Scholarship** to provide financial assistance to outstanding undergraduate students enrolled or planning to enroll at Penn State (including all satellite campuses). Children of USA members or those who are themselves members of the USA Softball of PA are eligible to apply. Visit our website [www.paUSA.org](http://www.paUSA.org) for more details and the application form and instructions.

## FORMS

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Various forms are available on the “FORMS” page on the USA Softball of PA website: [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org) including:

- Tournament Sanction Form
- Tournament Fact Sheet
- Pick-Up Player Form
- Pickup Player Rules
- Loechner Scholarship Application
- Bollinger Insurance Claim Forms

For forms not listed on the FORMS page, contact your district commissioner or the state office. Visit [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org) and click on “Click Here to view our 16 District Commissioners” to find your District Commissioner.



## OFFICIAL USA CHAMPIONSHIP ROSTER

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- Only REGISTERUSA-generated rosters will be accepted for advance play & championship tournaments for Eastern Nationals or Nationals.
- No hand-written rosters, no hand-written add-on players permitted – if JO Independent Registered Team you must complete the “Writable Official Championship Roster”/Writable “Pick Up Player” form found on our website under forms at [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org)..
- Players may be rostered on only ONE (1) Official USA Championship Roster within a Division & Class of Play in any one season.
- Page 1 and 2 of roster MUST be printed back-to-back on ONE (1) sheet of paper. Stapling page 1 and 2 together is NOT recommended.
- **Recommendation: Once roster is signed by parents and your local District Commissioner make multiple copies as the original copy will be collected upon entering an advanced play qualifying tournament.**
- An original Official Championship Roster must be submitted to Tournament Director for Qualifiers and/or State Championship tournaments.
  - Roster must be signed by team's ‘home’ District Commissioner or designee.
  - Roster must be signed by each parent or guardian if player is under 18 years old.
  - Roster may be signed by players ONLY if they are over 18 years old.
  - Original Rosters will be collected and submitted to State JO Commissioner immediately following a qualifying event for all qualifying teams.
  - Original Rosters will be kept on file for submission to the National/Eastern National Championship event to which the team will advance.
- **“OFFICIAL CHAMPIONSHIP ROSTER – Liability Waiver” (pg. 1 of 2)**
  - Teams Managers must complete bottom left portion
  - District/JO Commissioners must complete bottom right portion.
    - Sign on BOTTOM LINE (Signature of USA Deputy/District Commissioner)
    - USA Local Association & Region Number: “USA SOFTBALL OF PA – 03140”
    - **DO NOT SIGN ON LINE DESIGNATED “Signature of USA Local Association Commissioner or Designee”**. ONLY the USA SOFTBALL OF PA State Commissioner may be entered here. No other signatures should appear in this area.
    - The State Office or State JO Commissioner will obtain the State Commissioner’s (Andrew Loechner) signature once roster is validated and before roster is submitted with the Official Tournament Entry Form for National Championship entry.
- **“USA OFFICIAL WAIVER & RELEASE OF LIABILITY & INDEMNIFICATION FORM” (pg 2 of 2)**
  - The following fields are pre-printed on a REGISTERUSA generated roster form:

▪ Year	▪ Player’s Name
▪ Team Name	▪ Date of Birth
▪ City & State	▪ Bonafide Residence
▪ Division & Classification of Championship play	▪ E-mail Address (only if entered at registration)
  - **PARENT signature is required for all players UNDER 18 years old.**
  - “Initials” – acknowledges that the liability waiver and player affidavit information on page 1 of 2 was read and is understood.
  - *Must be signed by the District/JO Commissioner of the team’s ‘home’ district prior to participating in any USA tournaments (bottom right portion of pg. 1)*
  - Must submit original roster to USA SOFTBALL OF PA State JO Commissioner for entry into any National Championship Tournaments.
  - **IMPORTANT NOTE TO TEAMS:** Be sure to make several copies of your roster once you obtain all signatures. Your Original Roster must be submitted at your first qualifying tournament and will be forwarded to State JO Commissioner following your qualification for Championship Play.

## **PICKUP PLAYER & PICKUP PLAYER FORM**

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- Maximum of 3 pick-up players
- Pickup Players must be Individually Registered with USA Softball of PA
- Pickup players must be drawn from the same division of play and from the same or lower classification.
  - Division of play: Girls' Fastpitch
  - Classification: Age & Class, ex. 18U Class A
- Players must be from USA registered teams no longer eligible for championship play.
- Pick up players are NOT PERMITTED for National Qualifiers or Junior Olympic Hall of Fame Tournaments.
- Pick-up Players ARE PERMITTED for USA Softball of PA State Championships, USA Nationals and Territory National Championship finals.
- A player may play with only one team as a pick-up player other than their own team within a division in a season.
- A player may participate in only one State Championship tournament as a rostered player or pick-up player within a division in a season.
- Official USA Pickup Player Form must be completed and attached to the official Championship Roster before the team may participate in the tournament in which they are utilizing a pick-up player. Refer to our website, [www.usasoftballpa.org](http://www.usasoftballpa.org) under Forms.
- Pickup Player Form must be signed by State JO Commissioner and/or USA Softball of PA State Commissioner.
- Pickup player's photo ID and/or documentation must be submitted with the pick-up player form.
- Example: A 14U Class B player may be an eligible pick-up player for a 14U Class A team providing that the Class B player did not/will not participate in any other State or National Championship tournaments in the same season.

## **SPECIFICALLY FOR DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS & JO COMMISSIONERS**

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### **RESPONSIBILITIES Relating to Championship Rosters**

- Verify that all parent signatures have been obtained for players under 18 years of age.
- Verify that Manager's information is complete.
- Sign on bottom line "Signature of USA Deputy/District Commissioner"
- Date and enter your mobile phone number.
- USA Local Association & Region Number: enter "USA Softball of PA – Region 01"
- **DO NOT SIGN on "USA Local Association Commissioner or designee" (top) line. This will be completed when team qualifies and roster is sent to State JO Commissioner. This should bear ONLY our STATE COMMISSIONER's signature – Andy Loechner.**
- ***Be sure to distribute USA Rules Book, Scorebook and "Softball for You" booklet to every registered team in your District.***

## USA NATIONAL & EASTERN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

- The number of USA National berths made available to PA teams is based on the number of JO teams registered in that division in the previous year.
- USA Softball of PA Teams can qualify for USA National Championships by:
  - Winning an USA National Qualifier tournament, and/or
  - Finishing in the top 3 in their respective Class A State Championships.
- To qualify for Class A or Class B Eastern Nationals:
  - Win an Eastern National Qualifier, and/or
  - Compete in their respective Class A or Class B State Championships and at least 1 additional USA Sanctioned tournament, preferably a qualifier.
  - Host a qualifier (only 1 team berth per host organization) AND participate in your respective USA Softball of PA State Championship tournament.
- All teams advancing to Nationals/Eastern Nationals must participate in their respective State Championship tournament.
  - EXCEPTION: Teams who win an USA National Qualifier or Eastern National Qualifiers who officially accept their berth within 7 days of completion of the qualifying tournament. Those qualified teams must submit their Original Championship roster and National Championship entry fee to the State JO Commissioner within 14 days of the National Championship deadline.
  - Any unclaimed berths (those not claimed with 7 days of winning qualifying tournament) will be offered to the next team in succession of finish of that qualifying tournament or at the respective State Championship tournament.
- Teams/Players may participate in only one State Championship event in any one season.
- Teams/Players may participate in only one National Championship event in any one season.
- **Processing your Entry for National Championship tournaments – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY:**
  - After qualifying, a team's original championship roster must be submitted to the State JO Commissioner by the tournament director.
  - The team manager is responsible for contacting the State JO Commissioner to accept their National championship berth ***within 7 days of completing qualifying tournament***.
  - **Qualified team must submit a check payable to "USA Softball of PA" in the amount of the entry fee for the appropriate national tournament and forward to State JO Commissioner within 14 days of completion of the qualifying tournament or 14 days prior to the National Tournament Entry deadline date (whichever comes first).**
  - State JO Commissioner will complete Official Tournament Entry Form and submit to National Championship tournament director with Original Roster, entry fee (check from USA Softball of PA) and Pick-up player forms, if applicable.
  - **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD AN USA SOFTBALL OF PA JO TEAM SUBMIT AN ENTRY DIRECTLY TO ANY NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT. ALL ENTRIES MUST BE PROCESSED AND SUBMITTED BY THE STATE JO COMMISSIONER.**
  - Teams are responsible for their own travel and any other expenses related to their participation in any National Championship events.
  - USA Softball of PA will assist teams in obtaining information pertaining to the National Championship event, but are urged to check the National Website for links to the appropriate event:  
<http://www.USAsoftball.com/>
- Required documentation & certifications:
  - Official Original USA Roster & Official Tournament Entry Form with PROPER signatures will be submitted by State JO Commissioner.
  - Teams must present the following documentation at check-in/registration
    - USA Photo ID's
    - Coaches' USA Background Check
    - Coaches' ACE Certification documents
- Sign-in/Check-in procedure
  - Proof of USA Registration & Insurance is required.

- Sign-In Sheet:
  - Print and Sign their name and birthdate on the Tournament Sign-In Sheet while showing their Photo ID (Printed name only may be completed in order of the roster before tournament check in).
- Coaches must display proof of USA Background check and/or ACE Certification documents at all times during the tournament.

## **HOSTING A TOURNAMENT**

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The following guidelines have been compiled to ensure that hosting organizations are aware of the tasks involved in hosting an USA tournament, the obligations to USA Softball of PA and their responsibilities to provide a safe, affordable, quality tournament for all participants. Any questions, contact Suzanne Robison.

### **General Tournament Guidelines:**

- ◆ **NO TOURNAMENT MAY CONFLICT WITH THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FOR EQUIVALENT AGE/CLASSIFICATION.**
- ◆ Hosting organizations must be registered with USA Softball of PA and all tournament personnel should have USA background checks.
- ◆ Obtain approval BEFORE POSTING OR ADVERTISING your USA tournament:
  - Contact the State Office and/or State JO Commissioner with tentative date, location, tournament type, tournament format, age/classification, entry fee.
  - Tournaments will be managed to reduce conflicts and boost participation.
- ◆ Sanction your tournament:
  - All tournaments using the "USA" reference are subject to a sanctioning fee as follows:
    - Invitationals: \$50
    - Qualifiers: \$50 (plus \$25 per team assessment fee)
    - College Showcases: \$100
  - Sanction form, sanction fee and Tournament Fact Sheet must be submitted to USA Softball of PA for final approval.
  - Sanction Certificate will be provided by the State Office and must be prominently displayed at main field/complex.
  - Tournament will be posted on USA Softball of PA website and TournamentUSA (free of charge) once approved.
- ◆ Qualifiers: (see Guidelines for Qualifiers later in this manual)
  - Additional considerations pertaining to Qualifier Tournaments:
    - Team assessment fee: \$25 per participating team
    - JO QUALIFIER TOURNAMENT RESULTS REPORT.
    - Collect and forward USA Championship Roster for Qualifying team(s).
- ◆ Other considerations/expenses for Hosting Organization:
  - Request proof of teams' USA registration and insurance.
  - Determine awards package and purchase team trophies and individual awards.
  - Balls – Only Dudley (official Sponsor of USA Softball of PA) softballs should be used and are available for purchase through USA Softball of PA.
  - Umpire Fees
  - Field/complex Rental
  - Field maintenance: personnel, lining material, drying material, etc.

- TOURNAMENTUSA – full featured tournament management package is available for approved tournament directors at a cost of \$10 per team. Contact Suzanne Robison for more information.
- Tournament Liability Insurance is highly recommended and is available through Bollinger. Link: <http://www.rpsbollinger.com/site/>.

**GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING AN INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT (rev'd 11/1/2017)**

- **NO TOURNAMENT MAY CONFLICT WITH STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FOR CORRESPONDING AGE/CLASSIFICATION.**
  
- **PRE-APPROVAL IS RECOMMENDED.**
  - Dates/sites to be managed to encourage greater number of participating teams and eliminate conflict with qualifiers or other key tournaments via your local District Commissioner or the State JO Commissioner.
  
- **TOURNAMENTS MUST BE SANCTIONED THROUGH USA SOFTBALL OF PA BEFORE POSTING OR ADVERTISING TOURNAMENT**
  - Tournament Sanction Form (under “FORMS” tab) and \$50 sanction fee for invitationals and \$100 for Showcase/Clinic tournaments must be submitted to your USA District Commissioner or the State Office.
  - When Sanction Form & fee is received and tournament is approved by District Commissioner:
    - Tournament will be posted on USA Softball of PA website and Tournamentusa.
    - Sanction Certificate will be generated and sent to tournament contact via the state office.
      - Certificate must be displayed at main field throughout tournament.
    - Tournament may be posted on other tournament websites.
  
- **USA REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**
  - Only USA Registered Teams are eligible to participate.
  - For your protection, be sure teams provide proof of USA registration and insurance.
  - Note: USA Individual registration includes USA insurance.
  
- **ROSTERS**
  - USA Championship Rosters or Standard Rosters are acceptable.
  
- **OTHER TOURNAMENT EXPENSES**
  - All related fees and costs are the responsibility of the Hosting Organization:
    - Trophies, medals, balls, umpires, field rental, etc.
  
- **TOURNAMENT LIABILITY INSURANCE**
  - Tournament Liability and/or Accident Insurance are highly recommended.
  - Visit <http://www.rpsbollinger.com/site/> and click on Tournament/Clinic Insurance.

## **GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING A QUALIFIER TOURNAMENTS (rev'd 11/1/2017)**

These guidelines have been compiled to ensure that hosting organizations are aware of their responsibilities to USA Softball of PA and to provide a safe, affordable, quality tournament for participants. Any questions, contact Suzanne Robison.

- **NO TOURNAMENT MAY CONFLICT WITH THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT FOR EQUIVALENT AGE/CLASSIFICATION.**
- **Hosting organizations must be registered and background checked through USA Softball of PA and REGISTERUSA.**
- **PRE-APPROVAL REQUIRED BEFORE POSTING OR ADVERTISING.**
  - Dates, sites, format and entry fee are subject to approval of the State Office who will manage scheduling to encourage greater number of participants and to eliminate conflict with other qualifiers or key tournaments.
- **FEES TO BE PAID TO USA SOFTBALL OF PA:** \$50 tournament sanction/\$100 Showcase/Clinic Fee plus \$25 per participating team (for Eastern National/National qualifiers) (details below).
- **SANCTIONING THE TOURNAMENT WITH USA SOFTBALL OF PA**
  - Sanction form, \$40 sanction fee and Tournament Fact Sheet must be submitted to USA Softball of PA for final approval.
  - Sanction Certificate will be provided by the State Office and must be prominently displayed at main field/complex.
  - Tournament will be posted on USA Softball of PA website once approved.
- **TEAM ASSESSMENT FEE** - \$25 per team must be submitted within 7 days of completion of tournament with complete order of finish to the State JO Commissioner..
- **TOURNAMENTUSA** – This program permits authorized TDs to accept online registrations, create game schedules, track wins/losses, communicate with registered teams, etc. Cost: \$10 per team. Contact Suzanne Robison for details and/or to request authorization.
- **JO QUALIFIER TOURNAMENT RESULTS REPORT** (Available on website.)
  - Must be faxed or e-mailed to PA State JO Commissioner within 24 hours of completion of tournament.
  - Must be mailed to PA State JO Commissioner within 7 days of completion of tournament along with:
    - Team assessment fee (check made payable to USA Softball of PA)
    - Original signed roster of qualifying team(s).
- **USA REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**
  - Only USA Registered Teams are eligible to participate.
  - Only individually registered teams (REGISTERUSA) are eligible to advance.
  - Note: USA Individual registration includes USA insurance.
  - All advancing teams must contact their State JO Commissioner to accept berth to advance to National events.
- **ROSTERS - ONLY USA Championship Rosters** may be accepted.
  - Teams that are eligible to advance must submit the pre-printed Championship roster from REGISTERUSA
  - Must be signed by parent for every player under 18 years old (or by player if over 18)
  - Must be signed by team manager
  - Must be signed by District/JO Commissioner (PA) or by State or Metro Commissioner (out-of-state).
  - Original signed rosters must be collected at check-in.
  - Rosters of qualifying PA team(s) must be sent to PA State JO Commissioner within 7 days of completion of tournament.
- **Failure to report and/or submit assessment fee results in revocation of host team's berth to Eastern Nationals and possible suspension of team/organization from all USA events until settled.**
- **SUMMARY OF ELIGIBILITY/BERTH INFO:**

TYPE OF QUALIFIER	ELIGIBLE TEAMS	USA NATIONAL BERTHS	EASTERN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP (ENC) BERTHS*
Eastern National	Eastern Territory teams*	None	12 or less teams: 1 berth 13 – 30 Teams: 2 berths 31+ Teams: 3 berths Hosting Organization: 1 berth
USA National	<b>USA Softball of PA teams only</b> unless tournament was approved to accept teams from neighboring State/Metro Associations	1 <sup>st</sup> place ONLY	2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> place

\*Teams from other states require approval of their respective state/metro commissioner before they can accept any National Championship berth. One (1) Host team berth available per ENQ. PA teams must contact State JO Commissioner: Suzanne Robison – 717-545-1217 or [suzannerobison@earthlink.net](mailto:suzannerobison@earthlink.net) to advance

▪ **AWARDS/TROPHIES/BALLS/UMPIRE FEES/FIELD RENTAL – responsibility of Hosting Organization**

▪ **TOURNAMENT LIABILITY INSURANCE – highly recommended.** Visit <http://www.rpsbollinger.com/site/> to purchase.

**GUIDELINES FOR STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS (rev'd 11/1/2017)**

- State Championship Tournaments are held in various sites across the State.
- State Championships are administered, managed and directed by USA Softball of PA staff only.
- Organizations with suitable facilities may submit a request to host a State Championship to the State Office or State JO Commissioner.
- 4 game format (Weather Permitting):
  - 10,U, 12U, 14U, 16U, & 18U Class A and B: 2 pool play games will determine seeding into double elimination will be utilized.
- ONLY USA Softball of PA registered teams may participate in the PA State Championship tournaments.
- Teams may participate in only 1 state championship tournament within a division of play in a season.
- Players may participate in only 1 state championship tournament in a season as a rostered player or pick-up player.
- Teams who participate in USA Softball of PA State Championship tournaments may earn a berth to the appropriate USA Eastern National Championship tournament as follows:

<b>State Championship</b>	<b>USA NATIONAL BERTHS</b>	<b>EASTERN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP BERTHS</b>
Class "A"	Top 3 teams	All other participating teams who have competed in USA Softball of PA State Championship tournament or qualified via an Eastern National Qualifier.
Class "B"	None	All other participating teams who have competed in USA Softball of PA State Championship tournament or qualified via an Eastern National Qualifier.

- Awards package includes State Championship Awards (Jackets or other type of award approved by the USA Softball of PA JO Advisory Board/Board of Directors for 1<sup>st</sup> place team when at least 8 teams participate at any one level.

## **SANCTIONING YOUR TOURNAMENT**

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- **Tournaments advertised as “USA” or using USA rules or umpires, MUST be Sanctioned with State office. No exceptions.**
- USA Tournament Sanction Fees & Assessment Fees:
  - Invitationals & Qualifiers: \$50 per tournament
  - Qualifiers: A fee of \$25 per team assessment fee is due within 7 days of completion of the tournament. (See “Tournament Results Report” below)
  - Showcases: \$100 per tournament
  - Tournament Sanction Form is available online under the “FORMS” tab
  - Complete the form, print and send with your check payable to “USA Softball of PA” to the State office at 6449 Snavelly Court, Harrisburg, PA 17111
  - After approving your tournament the Tournament Sanction Certificate will be sent directly to the tournament director listed on the sanction form and must be posted at the main site of the tournament for the duration of the tournament.
- Tournaments that are not properly sanctioned cannot be advertised as an USA tournament. nor will USA Umpires be allowed to officiate the tournament. If they choose to do so those umpires will not be covered by their umpire insurance and players are not insured while working or playing in a non-sanctioned tournament.

## **VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME**

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- Volunteers are needed for various duties at local, state and national events.
- Please contact your District Commissioner, the State Office or the State JO Commissioner if you are interested in volunteering your time for our Youth Softball program.
- We are especially in need of **volunteers for Eastern National Championships** in York, PA in late July/early August. We need Check In Assistants, Scorekeepers, Bracket Keepers, etc.
- To volunteer or for more info, please contact Suzanne Robison, State JO Commissioner by phone at 717-545-1217 or email: [suzannerobison@earthlink.net](mailto:suzannerobison@earthlink.net)