

Southington Lightning Girls Softball Program

Guidelines

Article I – Name & Location

The name of this organization shall be the Southington Lightning Girls Softball Program, hereafter referred to as the Lightning or the Program. The Lightning is located in the Town of Southington, Connecticut.

Article II – Objective

The Lightning is a fast pitch girls travel softball organization dedicated to educating Southington players about sportsmanship, teamwork, discipline and integrity through competitive travel softball.

Article III – Organization

The Lightning is a subsidiary of and affiliated with the Southington Girls Softball League (the “SGSL”).

Article IV – Administration

The ultimate responsibility for administration of the Program is vested in the SGSL Board of Directors (the “Board”). To fulfill this obligation the SGSL Board shall delegate to the Lightning Board of Directors (the “Lightning Board”) the affairs of the Program. Specifically, the Lightning Board shall prepare, coordinate, maintain, execute and approve the Program’s Guidelines as well as any applicable and related policies and procedures.

Article V – Lightning Board of Directors

Section 1 - General Eligibility or Role

The Lightning Board shall consist of the Head Coach or General Manager of each Lightning Team and the Financial Manager also known as Lightning Board Members in existence during the Lightning fiscal year. Further a member of the Lightning Board shall be a member of the Board.

Section 2 - General Responsibilities

The Lightning Board shall:

- (a) Conduct the affairs of the Lightning and execute the policies established by these Guidelines.
- (b) Hold and manage regular and ad hoc meetings as necessary to conduct the affairs and business of the Lightning.

Section 3 - Specific Responsibilities

The Lightning Board shall:

- (a) Review and approve all Lightning game schedules & rosters
- (b) Provide financial oversight of each of team's budgets and financial reports
- (c) Manage all aspects of the Program's finances with prudence for the betterment of the Program, its teams and its players
- (d) Oversee all Lightning tryouts
- (e) Approve all practice jersey, logos and game uniforms for all Lightning teams
- (f) Hear grievances from any Lightning player or her parent(s) or guardian(s)

Accordingly, the Lightning Board must approve all actions and policies of the Program and its teams, including its budget, fund raising, publicity, facilities, schedules, rules and guidelines.

Article VI – Financial Manager

Section 1 - Role

Financial Manager shall:

- (a) Be a member of the SGSL Board
- (b) Be appointed by the Lightning Board of Directors

Section 2 - General Responsibilities

The Financial Manager shall:

- (a) In association with the Lightning Board conduct the affairs of the Lightning and execute the policies established by these Guidelines
- (b) Present a report of the condition of the Lightning at the Annual Meeting of the Board
- (c) Hold and manage regular and ad hoc meetings of the Lightning Board as necessary to conduct the affairs and business of the Lightning

Article VII – Lightning Board of Directors Meetings

Section 1 – Definition

A Lightning board meeting is any meeting of the membership of the Program conducted with sufficient notice and quorum to comply with these Guidelines.

Section 2 – Notice

Notice of each Lightning board meeting shall be communicated personally, electronically or by mail to each Lightning board member at the last recorded email address at a reasonable time in advance of the meeting.

Section 3 – Quorum

Any percentage greater than one half of the Lightning board members shall constitute a quorum at any meeting and a majority of those present shall govern.

Section 4 – Voting

Only Lightning board members shall be entitled to make motions and to vote at the Lightning board meetings. However, the Lightning Board may invite, admit and recognize guests for presentations or comments during the Lightning board meetings.

Article VIII – Head Coaches/General Managers

Section 1 – Selection Process

The Head Coach or General Manager (“Head Coach”) for each Lightning team will be selected by a panel consisting of the (1) current Lightning Board members; and (2) the SGSL President (together known as the “Selection Panel”) in existence at the time of the selection. If the SGSL President is also a current Lightning Coach or Financial Manager, such an individual will have two votes in all Lightning matters consistent with the individual’s responsibilities as SGSL President and Lightning Coach or Financial Manager. Each candidate must be a member of the Board and will complete the following to be selected as a Head Coach:

- (a) an application/questionnaire
- (b) a release for a criminal background screening
- (c) an interview conducted by the Selection Panel.

The Selection Panel will consider each candidate’s qualification and their desire to achieve consistency, uniformity, and continuity from year-to-year and across divisions. A majority of Selection Panel voting in the affirmative with sufficient attendance to warrant a quorum is necessary to approve candidate’s application.

A selected Head Coach may select his/her assistant coaches, but all assistant coaches must complete a release for a criminal background screening.

Section 2 – Selection Exemption

In an attempt to minimize bias in the selection process the Lightning Board can deem a Lightning board member non eligible to participate in the selection process if a member of the Lightning board member's immediate family plans to submit their name to be considered as a Head Coach.

Section 3 – Head Coach/General Manager's Continuation

In an effort to achieve stability in the Program a Head Coach may retain his/her position as Head Coach, at his/her discretion, from year-to-year as his/her team progresses through each age cohort. However the Financial Manager and SGSL President may petition the Lightning Board to reconsider a Head Coach's status as such and initiate a renewed selection process as stated above in Article VIII Section 1.

Section 4 - General Responsibilities

The Head Coach shall be responsible for all aspects of his/her team including but not limited to developing and managing the team's players, finances, practices, games, communicating with the families of the players and publicizing the team's activities. If so desired the Head Coach may assume the role or appoint someone to the role of General Manager. However, the ultimate responsibility for the team resides with the individual duly selected and appointed under Article VIII Section 1.

Section 5 - Specific Responsibilities

The Head Coach shall:

- (a) Appoint assistant coaches
- (b) Select, maintain and submit to the Lightning Board the team's roster
- (c) Set, maintain and submit to the Lightning Board in accordance with Article XI the team's game schedules
- (d) Establish, maintain and submit to the Financial Manager in accordance with Article XII the team's budget and financial reports
- (e) Accurately collect all income and disburse all expenses in a timely manner and in accordance with Article XII
- (f) Communicate with and manage the expectations of the families of the players
- (g) Manage all aspects of the team's finances with prudence for the betterment of the team and its players.

Article IX – Eligibility & Team Composition

Section 1 - General Eligibility

Any female residing in the Town of Southington, Connecticut at or below the age of 16 as of the “cut-off date”, are eligible to tryout for their respective age division (the “Division”). The Divisions are defined by the age as 10 and under (“10U”); 11 and under (“11U”); 12 and under (“12U”) etc. The cut-off date for age eligibility is January 1. For the purposes of these Guidelines the section of Southington called “Plantsville” is considered part of the Town of Southington.

Section 2 - Residential Exemption

Current and former Lightning and SGSL players regardless of their current residence are eligible to tryout for their respective Division. This exemption to Article IX, Section 1 is available to the extent that it does not violate Article IX, Section 3 discussed below. Such an exemption must be granted by the Lightning Board prior to the player trying-out for the Lightning. The Lightning Board may grant such an exemption.

Section 3 - Rosters

All Lightning teams will have no more than 18 players and no less than 10 players on their rosters. Injured players count as active members of the roster. Every Lightning team must have at least 60% of its players currently residing in the Town of Southington, Connecticut. For example: A team of 12 must have at least 8 players currently residing in the Town of Southington, Connecticut.

Section 4 - SGSL Membership

Lightning players will be considered active members of the SGSL. The Program through the respective teams may assign additional player dues to such players who are not participating in the SGSL recreational season. Such additional fees are designed to compensate the SGSL for the additional costs associated with such items as liability insurance, field and equipment usage.

Article X – Tryouts

Section 1 – Candidates Definition

A candidate is a player who desires to play on a Lightning team that is not currently associated with said team.

Section 2 – Candidates - Tryout Requirement

Each year every Lightning team will hold at least one tryout. During this tryout the Head Coach shall give each candidate an equal opportunity to 1) bat; 2) bunt; 3) field fly balls; 4) field ground balls; 5) throw; 6) run and 7) pitch in competition, if applicable, with other candidates within the same Division.

Section 3 – Returning Players Definition

A player currently on a Lightning team who desires to continue playing for said team.

Section 4 – Returning Players – Tryout Exemption

In an effort to maintain stability and to encourage the efficient use of Program time and resources at the discretion of the Head Coach returning players may be exempt from trying-out for a team when the team's season commences. In doing so, the Head Coach acknowledges said returning player(s) are members of his/her team for the upcoming season.

Section 5 – General

- a) Coaches are expected to communicate the results to all candidates in a reasonable time period.
- b) The Lightning will not charge for tryouts.

Article XI – Schedules

Section 1 - Period of Operation

The Program will have a fiscal year end of August 31. A Lightning team will commence operations on either September 1 of each year or once a Head Coach is selected by the Selection Panel which ever is later. A Lightning team will end its operations after the final financial report is submitted to the Financial Manager and the Head Coach has fulfilled his/her responsibilities as stated in Article XII, Section 9.

Section 2 - Games

Each Head Coach will submit to the Lightning Board a schedule of all games for approval. Such submission will identify tournament and league games as well as the league in which they plan to play. After the schedule has been approved by the Lightning Board any additions or deletions to the schedule other than whether related adjustments must be approved within the parameters previously mentioned. Please see the Fall Ball exclusion as discussed in Article XI, Section 5.

Section 3 - Coordination with the SGSL

In order to promote and encourage the development of the SGSL all Lightning teams will avoid schedule games at Panthorn Park or the "home" park of the SGSL that directly conflict with previously scheduled SGSL games and activities. Article XI, Section 3 applies to all Lightning teams and Divisions regardless of the Division and regardless of the number of current SGSL members on a Lightning team. Article XI, Section 4 is not subject to exceptions or waivers.

Section 4 - Fall Ball

A Lightning team's participation in Fall Ball as sponsored by SGSL will not be included in the number of games as discussed in Article XI, Section 2 above. As Fall Ball is a development program Article IX Section 3 – Rosters does not apply to Fall Ball participation.

Article XII – Finances & Budgets

Section 1 – Responsibilities

Each Lightning team is responsible for its own finances including the fulfillment of its own obligations including payment of its own expenses.

Section 2 – Player Registration Fees

Each Lightning team will charge each player a player's registration fee. Each team will determine the amount of such a fee and when and how such a fee should be collected.

Section 3 – Sponsorships

Each Lightning team is allowed to secure sponsorships as long as the sponsor does not represent anything inappropriate for youth athletics and does not conflict with sponsorships already secured by the SGSL. All sponsorships must be approved by the Lightning Board. Teams may display sponsors on mobile banners during practices or games. Teams may also display sponsorships on the Lightning website. Teams may display sponsors on a practice jersey as long as nothing regarding the sponsor is visible on a player's uniform during a game.

Section 4 - Budgets

Each Lightning team will submit a budget to the Financial Manager before the team's first practice. Each Lightning team will supply its final budget to the Financial Manager before the team's first non-Fall Ball game.

Section 5 – Financial Reporting

Each Lightning team will submit its revenue and expense activity to the Financial Manager in a timely manner. Each team will include the team's name, the team's Division and the sources and usage of the monies (e.g. player's fees). Each team is encouraged to share the team's financial activity with each player and their parent(s) or guardian(s) on a regular basis. Each team will submit its final and last revenue and expense items to the Financial Manager at the close of their season but no later than September 15th.

Section 6 – Residual Funds

Residual Funds are defined as any monies remaining in the team's account after payment of all team expenses. Residual funds eligible for distribution shall be calculated as:

- Player registration fees, plus non-SGSL sponsorship monies, plus team fund raising, plus team raised concession revenue less all team fees and expenses. Such monies shall be called "Eligible Residual Funds".

Residual funds that are not eligible for distribution and must remain in the Program after the end of the season shall be:

- Gross tournament registration revenue, gross merchandise sales, any miscellaneous income and any SGSL sponsorship monies. Such monies in existence at the end of the year shall remain part of the Program. Such monies shall be called "Non-Eligible Residual Funds".

The Financial Manager will calculate and communicate to each Head Coach each team's "Eligible and Non-Eligible Residual Funds on a regular basis.

Each Head Coach shall communicate to his/her players and their parent(s) or guardian(s) and the Financial Manager, in writing prior to the team's first game the Head Coach's intention regarding the retention or distribution of any Eligible Residual Funds remaining with the team at the conclusion of the team's season.

If a Head Coach decides to distribute the Eligible Residual Funds he must do so in equal amounts to the family of each player. A Head Coach may apply for and the Lightning Board may grant an exception to this rule.

Under no circumstance shall a player receive back more money than what she paid or her parent(s) or guardian(s) paid in Player Registration Fee.

Section 7 – Negative Balance

If there is a negative balance in the team's account at the end of the season the Head Coach shall collect from each family in equal amounts funds necessary to zero the negative balance and "close" the team's account for the season.

The Head Coach shall communicate this potential obligation to the players and their parent(s) or guardian(s) and the Officer, in writing prior to the team's first game

Section 9 – Program Financial Activities & Reporting

The Head Coach and the Financial Manager shall deposit team monies in the name of the Program in a bank approved by the Executive Board. The Financial Manager shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and payments by team and shall present a regular report, no-less than monthly to the Lightning Board. The Financial Manager shall pay out all monies of the Program by check unless it is for tournament umpire fees. The Financial Manager shall submit all necessary financial transaction to the SGSL Treasurer in a timely manner in order for the SGSL to comply with all federal and state regulations, customs and laws.

Article XIII – Conduct

All Lightning players, coaches, the Financial Manager and parent(s) will demonstrate the highest levels of conduct. The use of alcohol, foul language, tobacco or the illegal use of drugs during any organized activities is strictly prohibited. Additionally it is imperative that players, coaches and parent(s) represent the Lightning well by promoting great sportsmanship during games. Any inappropriate conduct by a player, coach or parent will be dealt with by the Lightning Board. Anyone ejected by an official from a game will have to meet with the Lightning Board within five (5) days of the offense or within a time that is reasonably possible for disciplinary action. Any player or coach ejected by an official from a second game will be suspended for the remainder of that season. Any parent ejected by an official from more than one game in a season

will meet with the Lightning Board for disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may include expulsion from the Program.

Article XIV – Uniformity

It is the desire of the Program to have a level of consistency between and among Divisions and teams. As such all teams will wear when reasonably possible the approved game uniforms using the same colors and logos. Although uniforms may change from year to year it is preferred that the uniforms remain as consistent as reasonably possible.

Article XV – Expectation of the Players and their Families

Section 1 - Loyalty

All Lightning players and at least one parent or legal guardian of each Lightning player will agree in writing not to play for another travel team while on a Lightning roster.

Section 2 - Participation

The Program encourages and expects the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) of players to actively support their child; the team, its coaching staff, and the Program. This includes participation in funding activities, team maintenance, and moral support.

Section 3 - Resignations

Any player wishing to withdraw as a member of the Lightning may do so at anytime. Such desire should be expressed in writing to the team's Head Coach. Upon resignation the player's family is not entitled to reimbursement of any player's fees or monies raised as members of the Program.

Article XVI – Multiple Teams in a Division

Section 1 - Objective

It is the desire of the Program to encourage all eligible residents to participate in the Program. To this effect, from time to time, the Program may have more than one team per Division. In such cases, as in all cases, the Program, through the Lightning Board will look to achieve consistency, uniformity, and continuity, in a team's coaching staff and roster and competitiveness among each team from year-to-year.

Section 2 – Aged-Based Objective

It is the desire of the Program to build and maintain an aged-based program in which each team attracts and retains eligible players within the same age cohort in accordance with Article IX.

Section 3 – Multiple Teams per Division

At the end of each fiscal year the Lightning Board will assess the interest, availability and the talent of eligible players in each age cohort in an effort to determine the viability of successfully maintaining more than one team in a Division. If in the Lightning Board's opinion there is sufficient quantity and quality of players eligible to successfully field multiple aged-based teams in a Division, the Board may propose the establishment of two-aged based teams in a Division.

If in the Lightning Board's opinion there is not a sufficient quantity and quality of players eligible to successfully field two aged-based teams in a Division, the Board may propose waiving the "Aged-Based" Objective as noted in Article XVI section 2 above and establish a non-aged based team in a division. In doing so the Lightning Board must consider the objective as stated in Article XVI section 1 specifically to achieve consistency, uniformity and continuity from year-to-year.

If in the Lightning Board's opinion there is sufficient quantity and quality of players eligible to successfully field more than one aged-based teams in a Division and an additional non-aged based team in the same Division, the Lightning Board may do so but must consider the objective as stated in Article XVI section 1 specifically to achieve consistency, uniformity and continuity from year-to-year.

Article XVII - These Guidelines

Section 1

A copy of these Guidelines shall be given to each SGSL officer, Lightning Board member and made available to the SGSL Board. A copy of these Guidelines shall be also posted on the Lightning website.

Section 2

The Guidelines may be amended or revised at any Lightning Board meeting in a manner consistent with the Program's customs.

All Lightning Board members shall demonstrate their acceptance and willingness to comply with these Guidelines by signing an acknowledgement to this effect prior to the beginning of each season.

These Guidelines were adopted on January 11, 2011, replacing and superseding any and all previous guidelines.